

OAK MAT GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR TRUSTEES AND GOVERNORS



Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	4
Our Schools	5
Purpose of the Handbook	6
Roles: members, trustees and local governors within MATs	8
Members	8
Trustees	8
Local governors within MATs	9
Eligibility	10
Trust Board	11
Trust Board Committees	12
Declarations	13
Conflicts of Interest	14
Publication of Details	14
Codes of Conduct	15
Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust	16
The Role of the Chair of the Trust Board	16
The Role of our Local Governing Bodies	16
Chairs and Vice Chairs of Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)	18
Local Governing Body Meetings	18
Clerking	18
Minutes	20
Meeting Etiquette	21
Decision-Making Process	21
Resignations / Terminations / Re-appointments	21
Trust Support	22
Governance Effectiveness	22
Recruitment	23
Skills Check and Evaluation	25
Local Governing Bodies	25
	2

Trustees	26
Chairs (LGB and Trustees)	26
Governance Lead	26
Induction, Training and Development	26
Induction	27
Other forms of training	28
Access training from GovernorHub	28
Leicestershire Governor Development Service	29
NGA / Learning Link	29
Governors for Schools: Free e-learning sessions and webinars	29
Confederation of Schools Trust (CST) Support	29
Governor Visits	29
Effective Questioning	30
Communication	30
Appendix 1: Trustee and Member details	32
Appendix 2: LGB Terms of Reference	33
Appendix 3: Trustee Board Committee Terms of Reference	40
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Curriculum and Standards	40
HR Committee	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 4: Code of Conduct	45
Appendix 5: How to use Governor Hub	50
Appendix 6: Training Plan	52
Appendix 7: Questions to ask during the governing board self-evaluation process	55
Appendix 8: 360° review: Chair of Governors / Trustees	62
Appendix 9: Governance Lead Appraisal	63
Appendix 10: Example Challenge Questions	71

Welcome

Thank you for your time and dedication to the governance of the OAK Multi Academy Trust (the Trust), a family of academies with a shared ethos, common values, and collective goals. We are working together in a model of meaningful, focused collaboration to achieve excellence in all our schools.

As a Trust, we are passionate about our children and our school communities. Governance is the first point of accountability and as a Board our ambition is to deliver world-class governance. Trustees and Governors of the Trust all make a vital contribution to the lives of children, and delivering the best to these children and their families remains a strategic priority.

Trustees have a wide range of relevant skills and experience; we use skills audits and impact assessments to make further skills-based Trustee appointments. The Board challenges the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and all school leaders to ensure that all children in our schools receive outstanding teaching and learning experiences. The Board is accountable for all schools within the Trust.

Trustees are clear about the role and responsibilities for our Local Governing Bodies (LGB). The LGB are the individuals appointed to support and challenge the Headteacher at their school. They are supported in this role by the CEO, Trustees and the Central Team. We value Local Governing Bodies, as they are the key supporters and representatives of the children and families in their schools and determine what happens at a ground level in schools and communities. Trustees support and encourage creative ways to deliver local governance that reflects the development state of each school and its governance needs. The powers that the LGB have are those that are delegated to them by the Board, and these are formalised in the Trust Scheme of Delegation. Further detail can be found in the LGB Terms of Reference.

Introduction

As a thriving, local trust of five schools covering 3-16 age ranges, we are located in Leicestershire and Leicester City, with an infant, a junior, two primaries, and one secondary. We are passionate about making a real difference to the lives of all our children and about empowering our whole school communities to enable this to happen to its fullest.

Our vision and values

Our OAK vision statement is: **Together we grow great schools**

We do this through our values by:

Continually identifying and supporting **opportunities** to improve;

having an unerring ambition to **achieve**; and

embodying **kindness** by doing the “right thing”

We believe that our colleagues are our greatest asset and we are building on our strong base of colleague benefits through extensive instructional coaching utilising Steplab. We are proud that two of our schools became a Steplab hub in September 2024. We also launched our exciting Trust wide digital transformation program *Frontiers* in 2024 which saw over half our schools introduce 1:1 iPad programme in 2024-25, with the other half being rolled out currently in September 2025.

Each of our schools has a strong identity, a hallmark of OAK. We collaborate extensively and agree strategy together whilst always valuing the different contexts of our schools. Each of our schools believe that we are stronger together and we have equity for all our pupils at the heart of our strategic decisions.

Our Schools

- **Brookside Primary School:**



- **Manor High School:**



- **Overdale Infant School:**



- **Overdale Junior School:**



- **Woodland Grange Primary School:**

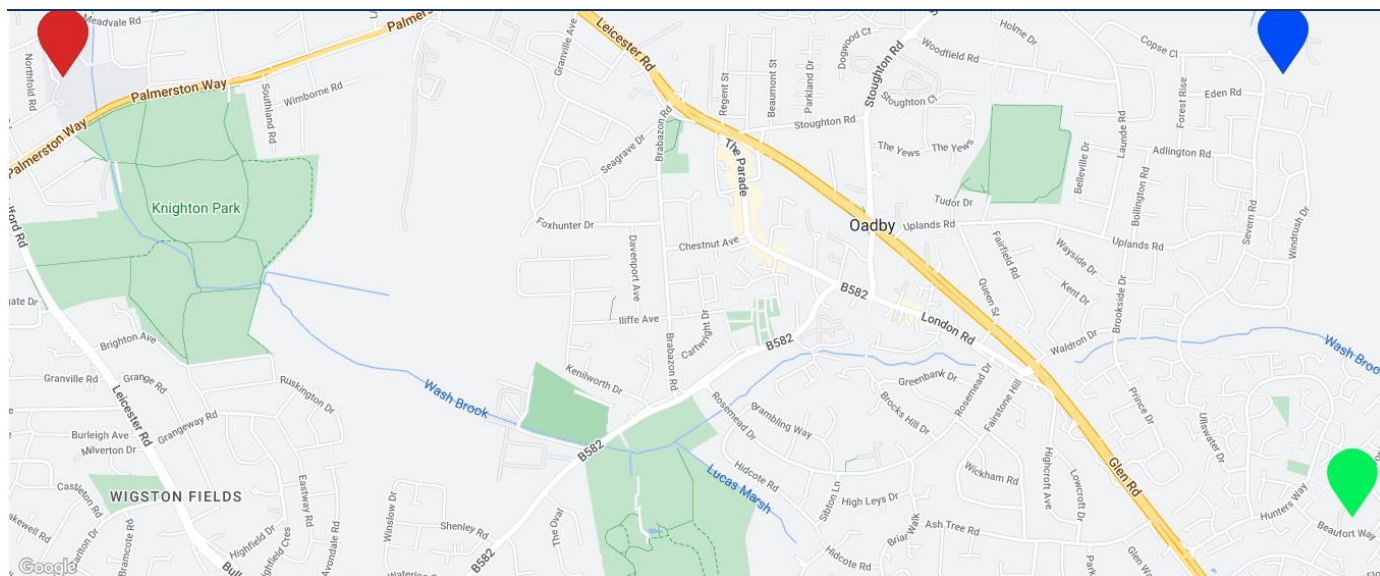


Our locations:

Red – Overdale schools

Blue – Brookside Primary and Manor High

Green – Woodland Grange Primary



Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook sets out the governance arrangements of the Trust. OAK Multi Academy Trust is a charitable company which relies on the input of a number of volunteers (Trustees, Members and Governors) supported by an experienced team of staff. As it grows and the number of schools it is responsible for increases, it is vital that the governance at every level is of the highest quality.

The information in this handbook has been prepared in line with the [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#) and the [Academies Financial Handbook](#) and supported by a range of key documents.

Key Governance Documentation

The following are used to support governance across the Trust:

- [Values and ethos](#)
- [Articles of Association](#)
- [Trust Scheme of Delegation](#)
- [Trust Induction pack](#)
- Terms of Reference
- Governor Hub portal (all meeting papers)
- Governor Hub resources area (includes all policies and procedures, and useful shared documents)

The aim of governance at the Trust is to deliver and support confident and strong strategic leadership, resulting in robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Trust is committed to good governance and we will continue to develop our governance arrangements to shape and take account of best practice in the sector.

Policies Management

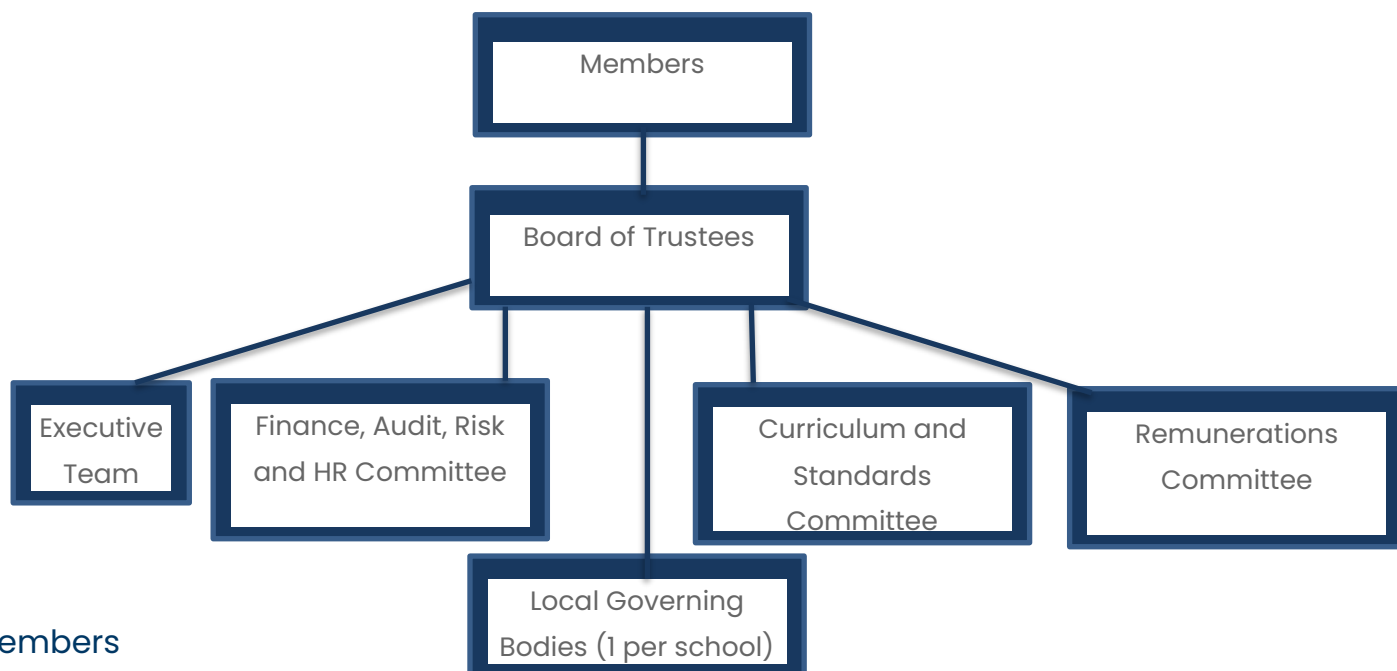
The Trust's policies and procedures form an important framework for its schools to ensure consistency in applying values and principles throughout, creating structure and function to provide for the educational and welfare needs of students.

The Trust maintains policies and procedures at various levels which include:

- Trust-wide policies – applicable to every school within the Trust
- Local school policies/procedures – applicable on a school-specific basis

The management and approval of policies are delegated across the full trust board and its committees. Each policy maintained by the Trust is reviewed on a regular basis or upon legislative change.

Roles: members, trustees and local governors within MATs



Members

- Are similar to a company's shareholders – they sit above the Board of Trustees and should be 'eyes on and hands off'
- Are signatories of the articles of association
- Have some specific responsibilities:
 - Appointing the trustees
 - Amending the articles of association
 - Dissolving the academy trust
 - Appointing external auditors

Academy trusts **must** have at least 3 members, but should have at least 5.

See section 4.2.1 of the [Academy trust governance guide](#)

Trustees

- Sit on the board of an academy trust (the Board of Trustees)
- Are both charity Trustees and company directors of the academy trust
- Are the equivalent of Governors in maintained schools
- Ensure compliance with charity and company law, and the academy trust's funding agreement

- Should focus on the following descriptions of the Trust Board's purpose (please note that these descriptions, laid out in the Academy Trust Handbook 2023, replace the '3 core functions' of governance):
 - Strategic leadership of the academy trust – the board defines the trust vision, fosters the trust's culture and sets its strategy, including determining what (if any) governance functions are delegated
 - Accountability and assurance – robust oversight of the trust's operations and performance
 - Engagement – strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders (parents, schools and communities)
- Are accountable to the members of the Trust and the secretary of state

This is covered in section 2.2 of the [Academy Trust governance guide](#).

Members and trustees should be distinct

This is because:

- At least a majority of members should not be on the Board of Trustees
- If members sit on the Board of Trustees, this reduces their ability to be objective about the trustees. It also increases the risk of unchecked 'group think' by the board

This is explained in section 4.2 of the [Academy trust governance guide](#) and in section 1.6 of the ATH.

Local governors within MATs

In a MAT, the Board of Trustees can delegate some of its functions to 'local governing bodies' (LGBs) in each or some of the schools.

Local Governors:

- Have no powers except what's been delegated to them, which is set out in terms of reference and a scheme of delegation
- With no delegated powers are wholly advisory
- Are not Trustees or directors (unless they also sit on the trust board)

See section 4.3.5 of the [Academy trust governance guide](#), and page 32 of model of the Trust Articles of Association.

Local Governors are an essential part of our Trust governance, and form the 'eyes and ears' on the ground of each school and its community (see p.15).

The LGB Terms of Reference clarify the role and expectations on local Governors (Appendix 2).

Eligibility

Any person over the age of 18 is eligible to hold the role of Trustee or Governor. There are certain circumstances which would make a person ineligible for the role of Member, Trustee or Governor and if already appointed would cause them to immediately cease being a Member, Trustee or Governor. Ineligibility occurs if a person:

- is or becomes disqualified from holding office under the Articles of Association
- is or becomes incapable by reason of illness or injury of managing or administering their own affairs
- is absent from all meetings held within a six-month period without the permission of the Trustees or the relevant LGB and the Trustees or LGB resolves the person in question must vacate their office
- is or becomes disqualified from holding office as a Governor of a school
- is included in the list of teachers or workers considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- is paid to work at any school and is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his or her employment
- has not provided a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1997
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children
- is or becomes bankrupt or makes any arrangement or composition with his/her creditors generally; is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order; or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced
- is subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- is convicted of any criminal offence (other than minor offences under the Road Traffic Acts or the Road Safety Acts for which a fine or non-custodial penalty is imposed or any conviction which is a spent conviction for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)
- has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on any school premises during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a Trustee or LGB Member
- refuses to an application being made to the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) for a criminal records check
- commits a serious breach of the code of conduct or any standing order or protocol implemented by the Board of Trustees
- resigns his/her office by notice in writing to the chair
- in the case of a Principal/Headteacher, they cease to be the Principal/Headteacher
- in the case of a LGB Member, their term of office expires and they are not re-appointed
- has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of OAK Multi Academy Trust and/or the school they serve and has brought or is likely to bring the school, LGB, Trust or office of governor into disrepute.

- is in breach of the duty of confidentiality to the Board of Trustees, the school, a current, future or previous governor, any member of staff or student.

Trust Board

Our Trust Board will set the strategic direction of the Trust, maintain legal oversight, monitor all activities, assess the performance of our schools and established and review policies and practices governing the life of our schools. The specific tasks and responsibilities of our **Trustees** are as follows:

- To determine the vision and ethos of the Trust whilst acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual school and the needs of the communities they serve.
- To, in conjunction with our CEO, develop a strategic plan for the Trust and to ensure the effective communication of that plan so it can be implemented across the Trust and in all our schools.
- To establish and maintain the schools (including the consideration of expansion of the Trust by taking existing or new schools into the Trust).
- To determine and ensure the implementation of policies and procedures which it is intended will achieve a consistently high quality of education and financial sustainability across the Trust.
- To make or ratify suitable appointments of individuals who serve or will serve on our Local Governing Bodies, including removing such individuals who fail to fulfil the expectations of the role.
- To approve the overall Trust budget and the budgets of each school, having regard to any recommendations of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee which is responsible for conducting a thorough review of all budget proposals.
- To formally appoint the CEO.
- To provide challenge and support to the CEO and through this role to our schools.
- To set objectives and undertake performance appraisal of the CEO.
- To ensure that the CEO is effectively overseeing the objectives and outcomes of each school.
- To ensure appropriate performance management systems are in place and are effective across the Trust and are accompanied by relevant programmes for the professional and personal development of all staff.
- To regularly receive and review the key performance indicators (KPIs) from the schools.
- To oversee the delivery of the benefits that collaborative working, common approaches and common systems will bring across the schools.
- To ensure that the Trust operates effective health and safety systems and procedures.
- To ensure that the Trust has robust safeguarding arrangements in the Trust and all schools.

- To ensure there are robust financial systems and procedures in place that are adhered to by the Trust and each school (using termly internal audits to provide such assurance).
- To oversee the performance and delivery of any service provided by the Trust to the schools.
- To ensure proper advice is available to the Trust in relation to legal and compliance matters.
- To ensure a comprehensive risk management framework and appropriate risk management strategies are put in place and maintained across the Trust and schools.

The organisation of the Trust Board is set out in our Articles of Association which determine the minimum frequency, quorum and the process for the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust Board. Our Trust Board will meet at least 4 times a year and the quorum for any meeting is two.

Trustees will make good decisions:

- Selflessness** - All decisions have been taken in the public interest.
- Integrity** - Not acted or taken decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or their friends.
- Objectivity** - Decisions have been taken impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability** - Comfortable with submitting themselves to external scrutiny.
- Openness** - Take decisions in an open and transparent manner.
- Honesty** - Have been truthful in their actions, decisions and reporting.
- Leadership** - Demonstrated the highest standards of public life in their individual and corporate behaviour.

Trust Board Committees

Trustees have outlined delegated powers from the full Board to a number of Trustee Committees; the Executive Team of the Trust and to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). Full details of the delegated authority can be found in our Scheme of Delegation. The Board reserves the right to withdraw powers to any specific Committee or LGB at any stage at its discretion. Any dispute will be subject to normal resolution by the full Board of Trustees whose decision will be final.

Trust Committees include:

- Finance, Audit and Risk** – to review all key finance, risk and audit matters. This Committee will receive monthly finance reports, internal and external audit reports and set an appropriate finance policy whilst taking into account latest releases of the Academies

Financial Handbook. The Committee will meet at least 3 times per year and report into full Trust Board.

- b. **HR** – to review all key HR matters. The Committee will meet at least 3 times per year and report into full Trust Board.
- c. **Remuneration** – to conduct annual performance appraisal of the CEO (and any special category staff), and to review all pay recommendations for Senior Management employees. The Committee will meet annually in order to make a recommendation to the full Trust Board.
- d. **Curriculum and Standards** – to review individual school performance. The Committee will meet at least 3 times per year and report into full Trust Board.

Each Committee has its own terms of reference which can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Declarations

Trustees, upon appointment, complete and provide a range of compliance documentation in order to fulfil the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook and safeguarding. This includes:

- DBS
- Declaration and Confirmation of Interests
- Code of Conduct
- Skills Audit

Thereafter, Trustees annually review their declarations, at the first meeting of each academic year, making any changes where appropriate. DBS details are entered onto the Trust's single central record (SCR) to comply with safeguarding arrangements.

All details of Trustees and Local Governors are entered into the Department for Education's GIAS database (get information about schools).

All declarations of interest, even where there is a nil return, are recorded on Governor Hub and updated on the trust website and relevant school website. These declarations are a statutory requirement and need to be completed.

All agendas include the declaration of any interests – professional or personal – for that particular meeting. Any failure to make a declaration shall require that they either complete a declaration immediately, withdraw from the discussion or leave the meeting.

Anyone who fails to disclose an interest having being requested to do so, may result in removal of their office and shall not be eligible for re-appointment at the Trust or at any school within the Trust.

Included in the signed declaration of interests is any role that the Trustee/Governor may hold in another educational institution whether as a governor, employee, proprietor, consultant or in any other capacity.

All pecuniary interests and interests in other educational establishments are disclosed on the Trust website as required by the Academies Financial Handbook.

Gifts and hospitality may not be accepted and any offer must be notified to the Trust's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The CFO shall be responsible for advising the Trust Board whether any such offer constitutes an attempted bribe or other irregularity and the Board will determine whether any further action shall be taken against the supplier or potential supplier making the offer.

Conflicts of Interest

It is important that Members, Trustees and Local Governors not only act impartially but are seen to act impartially. They have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and affairs and those of the Trust and its schools. Careful management of, and the avoidance of, conflicts of interest are also requirements of both the Articles of Association and the ESFA Academies Financial Handbook. Anybody who has or can have any direct or indirect duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest) which conflicts or may conflict with their duties as a member of the Local Governing Body or Trustee Board shall disclose that fact to the Chair as soon as they become aware of it. A person must absent themselves from any discussions of the Local Governing Body or Trustee Board in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between their duty to act in the interests of the Trust or School and any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest).

Any disagreement between the members of the Local Governing Body and the Headteacher shall be referred to the Trustees for their determination.

All Governors and Trustees are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Publication of Details

In accordance with school governance requirements as defined by the DfE and ESFA, specific details relating to Trustees, Governors and Members must be published and form part of the Trust's formal record. These publication requirements include:

- Name, term of office, role, committee membership, meeting attendance and declarations of interest shall be published centrally on the Trust website and school websites where appropriate
- Name, term of office, role and appointing body will be published on the DfE's Get Information About Schools (GIAS)
- Name, term of office, role, committee membership and meeting attendance for the previous year will be published in the Trust's annual report

- Name, any former names, address, occupation, role and date of birth of Trustees will be published on the Companies House register

In order to meet our legislative requirements, please update the Governance Lead within two weeks should any of the personal details outlined above change (e.g. home address).

Codes of Conduct

OAK Trust has separate Codes of Conduct for Trustees and Governors to reflect the different responsibilities of each group. Every Member, Trustee and Governor is required to sign the Code of Conduct declaration at their first appointment and then at each subsequent year of appointment at the (autumn) term meeting. Both Codes are found in **Appendix 4** and are signed on Governor Hub.

All Members, Trustees and Governors are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). The Nolan Principles were published in 1994, outlining seven principles considered to embody an ethical code expected of all who serve in the public sector, be they employees or volunteers:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Chair and Vice Chair of the Trust

Our Trust Board, annually, at their first meeting, appoint a Chair for the Trust Board from within their numbers. Any person who, at the time of the election, is already a Trustee shall be eligible for appointment as Chair or Vice Chair. The Chair or Vice Chair may at any time resign his/her position by giving notice in writing to the Trust Board Governance Lead. No employees of the Trust may apply for the position of Chair or Vice Chair of the Trust Board.

The Role of the Chair of the Trust Board

Our Chair has a fundamental role in leading the business of the Trust and as a pivot between the Trustees and CEO. The specific tasks and responsibilities of our Chair are as follows:

- To ensure the Board provides a strategic focus to the Trust and our schools.
- To manage the business of the Trust Board to ensure it undertakes its duties efficiently and effectively in and between board meetings.
- To build, develop and mould our Trustees into an effective team, taking account of recruitment, succession and the professional development needs of the Trustees.
- To work in partnership with the CEO, developing a professional relationship, providing appropriate encouragement, challenge and support.
- To promote a culture of robust evaluation and continuous improvement across the Trust striving to drive up standards.
- To ensure the Board meets all its legal requirements by working closely with the Company Secretary and Clerk/Adviser to the Board.
- To represent the Trust to key external partners, the media and the public when required.

The Role of our Local Governing Bodies

Our Trustees have determined that each school will have its own Local Governing Body (LGB). LGBs – appointed by Trustees – provide a tailored local model of governance for each school and each appropriately reflecting the local context and community. The Scheme of Delegation provides details of general powers delegated to each LGB which may be extended or withdrawn as Trustees see fit.

The purpose of LGBs is to provide the strategic direction support and local accountability for the performance of their school within the framework and parameters set by our Trustees. They are non-executive bodies supporting Trustees to deliver its responsibilities.

Those who serve on LGBs are accountable to the Trustees and must ensure that at all times they act in good faith and in the best interests of the schools and the Trust, exercising reasonable care and skill having particular regard to personal knowledge and experience. All Governors must declare any business interests and any conflicts of interests on to their Governor Hub account.

The core duties of a LGB are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of their school.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its children.
- Overseeing safeguarding, health and safety and stakeholder engagement.

Effective governance, according to the Department for Education (DfE) is based on six key features:

- Strategic leadership – that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
- Accountability – that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
- People – with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
- Structures – that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Compliance – with statutory and contractual requirements.
- Evaluation – to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

To demonstrate these skills and to achieve their own school's objectives, LGBs should:

- Monitor performance and the achievement of objectives and ensure that plans for improvement are acted on including the quality of provision.
- Ensure there is policy development and strategic planning, including target setting, to keep up momentum on school improvement.
- Ensure there is sound management and administration of the school.
- Ensure appropriate compliance and legal requirements are in place.
- Establish and maintain a transparent system of prudent and effective internal controls.
- Helping the school be responsive to the needs of parents and the community making it more accountable through consultation and reporting.
- Setting the school's vision, priorities and standards of conduct and values.
- Assessment and managing risk.

Chairs and Vice Chairs of Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)

The term of office for Chair of Governors is one year, and Chairs are usually re-appointed at the start of each academic year.

The Trust Board will approve all Chair appointments.

Chairs may, at any time, resign their position and should do so in writing to their Clerk. The Trust Board may also remove any Chair at any time where it feels is in the best interests of the Trust.

Where LGBs have sufficient number, they will appoint a Vice Chair. Vice Chairs may, at any time, resign their position in writing to their Clerk.

The Trust holds a termly Chair of Governors meeting, during which the Chair of each LGB will meet with the Chair of Trustees, Vice Chair of Trustees and the Chief Executive, to receive feedback, discuss any areas of concern, and to share information about future plans of the Trust. **This Committee meets termly, and in advance of the full Trustee Board meeting**

Local Governing Body Meetings

LGBs will meet a minimum of three times a year and the dates will be set to fit with the dates of the Trust Curriculum and Standards Committee. Reports from the LGBs will be submitted to the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

The Trust Governance Lead will work with the CEO and Chair of Trustees to set standardised agendas for each LGB, which can then be added to by the Chair / Clerk if required.

Confidential items should be noted at the end of each meeting and reported in separate minutes.

At least seven days prior to the meeting, the Clerk will provide all reports or other papers to be considered at the meeting; and a copy of the agenda for the meeting.

The quorum for any LGB meeting is one third of members of the LGB plus 1.

Clerking

The LGBs are clerked by staff from the clerking agency Syzygy which is overseen by the Trust Governance Lead. In the absence of the Clerk from a Local Governing Body meeting, the LGB may appoint any one of the Governors to act as Clerk for the purposes of that meeting.

The Trust Governance Lead shall be appointed by the Trustees for such term, at such remuneration and upon such conditions as they may think fit; and any Governance Lead so appointed may be removed by them. The Governance Lead shall not be a Trustee, or the Chief Executive Officer. The Trustees may, where the Governance Lead fails to attend a meeting of theirs, appoint any one of their number or any other person to act as Governance Lead for the purposes of that meeting. All Clerks will prepare and distribute

all governance documentation in preparation for any meeting. All meetings and information are treated as confidential.

The Clerks will store electronic information in relation to the Trust procedures and ensure that Governors can access information easily and where required, in paper format.

Minutes will not be released to any person until they have been checked by the Chair of the meeting.

Trust Governance Lead responsibility

- Organises clerk recruitment
- Assists in sourcing and recruiting local governors
- Onboards clerks
- Updates Governor Hub and GIAS
- Organises trust governance sessions
- Updates governance information on the website
- Creates standardised governance documents, such as agendas, annual planners and terms of reference
- Meets with clerks
- Assists with panels where needed (although this responsibility still rests with the LGBs)
- Updates annual governance forms (e.g., the code of conduct, terms of reference and skills audits)
- Runs chairs' forums
- Supports chairs with any queries
- Liaises with the local authority (LA)
- Makes sure there is communication between the trust central team and LGBs. For example, that LGBs are consulted where necessary
- Makes sure the trust is compliant
- Central policy management (but not in-school policy management)
- Managing declarations of interest
- Updating GIAS and website with new/resigned governors
- Updating websites with attendance reports
- Skills audits / evaluation reports
- Create weekly newsletters to update governors and trustees on training opportunities and local sector news
- Arrange annual LGB/trustee strategy evening

Local Clerks responsibility

- Onboard governors
- Finalising agendas
- Minutes
- Panel arrangements

- Active management of actions arising from the LGBs
- Collation of and reporting on actions
- Set dates for meetings in collaboration with Trust Governance Lead (but add separate meetings for specific purposes if needed): 3 standard LGBs per year, to fit in with reporting to Trust C&S committee
- Ensure papers are distributed within appropriate time frames
- Update Trust Governance Lead on new/resigned governors
- To review the performance and effectiveness of the LGB through an annual evaluation report to the Trust Board.

Clerks and the Governance Lead are governed by the same principles as Governors and Trustees:



Minutes

The minutes of every Governing Body meeting will be produced by the Clerk and shall be signed at the next subsequent meeting by the Chair. Draft minutes must be submitted to the Chair within a reasonable period of time (10 working days). Clerks shall upload signed minutes onto Governor Hub. Minutes can be signed via Governor Hub if meetings are virtual.

The purpose of the minutes is to:

- Record any decisions taken at the meeting so that auditors and regulators can be assured that any actions taken by a school were properly authorised;
- Record any actions agreed upon and the ownership of those actions so that they can be followed up at subsequent meetings to ensure compliance with the requirements of Governors;
- Record the participation and contribution of Governors so that reviewers can be assured of the quality of governance.

LGB minutes are reviewed by the Trust CEO and all minutes will be made available to internal and external auditors upon request.

Meeting Etiquette

Terms of reference for each body or committee include details pertaining to membership, duties and responsibilities, along with meeting frequency, quoracy and minute-taking arrangements.

Should a Trustee or Local Governor want to submit an item for inclusion in the board or one of its committees, they should forward their request to the Clerk or Governance Lead at least 14 working days before the meeting. Late items of an urgent nature may be added to the list of any other business, at the discretion of the respective chair.

Meetings will be held in person unless otherwise advised.

Decision-Making Process

Should there be a requirement for the Trust Board or its committees to be taken outside of the established meeting framework, the following action should be taken:

An ordinary resolution will be drawn up by the Governance Lead and sent to each Trustee (or Member as appropriate), who must sign and return a copy of the resolution without having to hold a specific meeting.

Resignations / Terminations / Re-appointments

Until notice of resignation or termination takes effect, Trustees and Governors are still included in determinations of quoracy and decision-making processes.

Upon resignations or terminations taking effect, access granted such as IT accounts and Governor Hub shall be terminated. The Governance Lead will be responsible for updating associated publication platforms.

Local Governors may resign their position by providing written notice to their Clerk and Chair of Governors. The Clerk should notify the Governance Lead. There is no set notice period; however, Governors are strongly recommended to provide at least one month's notice where possible to mitigate against subsequent potential quoracy issues.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees and Members are required to provide written notice of their resignation to the company by way of the Governance Lead who will share the notice with both the Chair of Trustees and the CEO. A minimum of three Members and five trustees must remain in office when the notice of any Trustee/Member is to take effect.

A Trustee or Local Governor might have their appointment terminated if they become ineligible to remain in post due to the following:

- If they are absent without the permission of Trustees from all their meetings held within a period of six months and Trustees resolve that their position be vacated
- If they become incapacitated by reason or illness or injury of managing their own affairs
- If they have not provided the undertakings required by their position in the appointment paperwork
- If they are declared bankrupt and/or their estate is seized or they are the subject of bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order
- If they are subject to a disqualification order
- If they are found to have engaged in any misconduct or have failed to disclose any information that would confirm their unsuitability to work with children
- If they are found to have been convicted of any criminal offences

Prior to termination taking place, the Trustee or Local Governor will be advised that a motion for their termination will be raised at the next Trust Board meeting, and request contact to be made within two weeks if they wish to discuss. The correspondence shall include the intended date of effect. Should an individual seek to continue their appointment, their response will be shared with the Trust Board for consideration. If the individual does not respond, the motion will be received by the trust Board and the Governance Lead shall communicate the decision and take appropriate steps.

Trust Support

The Trust offers a range of advice, guidance and support to all Governors including:

- Online training, from the Local Authority Governor Development Service, the Key for Governance and the NGA's Learning Link
- Face-to-face bespoke training annually
- Notifications of upcoming training
- Advice and support from the Trust Central Team
- Support for disciplinary and complex panels (staff and child panels)
- Administrative support such as setting agendas, updating websites and GIAS.

Governance Effectiveness

Building a successful Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body, like any team building, is about achieving balance and diversity in skills and experience. A well-functioning Trustees Board or LGB will

need individuals with skills in business planning, who have financial and legal understanding, the ability to analyse and review different types of data and a willingness to take up a challenge and learn on the job. They will possess an ability to be creative and to be able to communicate complex ideas in an easily accessible way and who have a passion for education.

Trustees Boards and LGBs should be ambitious and aim to recruit people from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible because diversity among board members helps all Trustees and Governors access and understand other points of view; essential in the context of an organisation such as a school.

Governance is a strategic role – management is the job of the Trust and Schools’ professional leaders.

Recruitment

Trustees

The Trust is open to applications for the role of trustee. When an application is received, the following procedure is followed:

- Application is reviewed by Chair and CEO
- If approved, they then meet with the applicant (via Teams is fine)
- If they confirm the applicant meets the requirements, then the trustee will be appointed in one of the two following ways:
 - Member Appointed: Members will be sent the application and will appoint via written resolution.
 - Trustee Co-Opted: Trustees will review the application and approve the appointment via written resolution.
- Chair writes to applicant confirming appointment
- Governance Lead commences onboarding which includes (see separate policy for more information):
 - asking AIT for an email address
 - registering the trustee onto GovernorHub, NGA and Leicestershire Governor Development Service
 - Requesting ID for a DBS check
 - Sending the trustee meeting dates for the year and inviting them to the next Board meeting
 - Preparing an ID badge
 - Arranging for the relevant statutory training
 - Giving the trustee sight of relevant documents (via Governor Hub)
 - Arranging for them to visit with the schools via the CEO

- Governance Lead updates the website and GIAS
- Governance Lead updates the CFO to add trustee to Companies House

Governors

External Applications

- Local Clerk sends application to Chair and Headteacher to review
- Chair and/or Headteacher meets with the applicant
- Applicant is invited to the next LGB meeting for formal approval to join the Board
- Information is relayed to Trust Governance Lead to bring to next Trust Board meeting for formal appointment
- Applicant is asked to bring ID to Board meeting where copies will be taken and sent to school business manager for DBS check and to be added to the school system.
- Once formally approved, Local Clerk starts onboarding process including arranging for an email and being given access to Governor Hub. There is an induction process used across all LGBS (see separate policy).
- Governance Lead to update website and GIAS
- Business Manager to update Leicestershire Governor Development Service.

Elected Parent Local Governors

Parent Local Governors for each LGB shall be elected in accordance with the process set out below:

- When a vacancy arises, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the school seeking nominees for the vacancy. Nominees will be asked to provide a short statement about why they are interested in being a Parent Local Governor and their background and experience that makes them suitable for the role.
- In the event that the number of nominees equals or is less than the number of vacancies on the LGB, the LGB can choose to appoint all (or any) of those nominated.
- If there are more nominees than places available, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the school asking them to vote for their preferred candidate.
- Local Clerk to inform Governance Lead for formal appointment by Trustees, and to add to services as above.

Skills Check and Evaluation

The Trust carries out regular reviews of the effectiveness of governance across the Trust. The Board and LGBs are supported by the Governance Lead to carry out skills audits and self-evaluation.

Skills audits are a useful way of assessing the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours of the Board of Trustees or an LGB. The results can help to identify any gaps there may be in essential competencies across individual school LGBs. Appropriate training and/or recruitment can then be put in place to ensure that all Trust LGBs can deliver their core functions.

No individual Trustee or Governor will have all of the skills listed; they work as a team. The purpose of the skills audit is to ensure that each of the essential skills is covered by the Board of Trustees or an LGB. It is the intention to enable Trustees and Governors to set out their skills and experience, whatever their backgrounds, and make clear that the essential and desirable skills for governance can be acquired through a range of life experiences. The experience and skills within the audit may come from either peoples' professional or personal lives.

Local Governing Bodies

Each spring there will be an audit of all governors' skills and knowledge.

Skills Audit

Each LGB will be asked to complete an audit as part of the self-evaluation process. The audit will:

- Help local governors consider their confidence with regard to the 6 key competencies in the Department for Education's (DfE's) competency framework for governance
- Identify any potential areas for training and development among local governors
- Help inform your recruitment and hiring decisions in the future

The audit will be sent out at the start of the autumn half-term each year, ready to be discussed at the next LGB meeting (January) and fed back to Trustees. This will be done via Governor Hub, and a reminder will be sent.

Analysis of Performance

We use questions (Appendix 7) to analyse each LGBs' performance across 3 key areas. For each question, boards will be asked to rate their confidence on a scale of 1 to 5, with examples of possible sources of evidence to support their answers.

To also consider any areas for development identified in schools' last Ofsted inspection and whether these are being addressed.

LGBs should complete the evaluation ahead of the spring meeting. This will be done via Governor Hub, and a reminder will be sent.

The Governance Lead will analyse the results and findings will be presented at summer LGB Chairs' forum.

Trustees

Skills Audit

The Trustees will be asked to complete an audit as part of the self-evaluation process.

The audit will be given out at the November Board meeting each year, and results will be requested by the end of January to allow the Governance Lead to collate and analyse responses, for discussion at the March Board meeting. This will be done via Governor Hub, and a reminder will be sent.

Evaluation

The governance lead will circulate a MAT Trustee Board self-evaluation in January of each year. This should be returned by the February half-term so that the Governance Lead can analyse the responses ahead of the March board. This will be done via Governor Hub, and a reminder will be sent.

Chairs (LGB and Trustees)

Each summer, the Governance Lead will request a review of Chair's performance in both the Trustee Board and the LGB. This will be done via a 360-degree appraisal (Appendix 8) and will be circulated to the members of each governing board/trustees at the start of the summer term. Results will be returned to the Governance Lead to produce a report on the findings.

Governance Lead

Each summer, the Governance Lead will ask Chairs to carry out an appraisal of the Local Clerks (Appendix 9).

Induction, Training and Development

All Trustees and Governors are expected to keep themselves up-to-date and attend specific training to enhance their skills and knowledge throughout their term of office. This will remain a standing item on each LGB and Trust Board agenda. All staff and volunteers at the Trust are encouraged to keep learning. Through continuing to build knowledge, individuals can make an even bigger impact. The Governor Hub resources area includes several suggestions to facilitate self-service learning. Any specific training requirements may be discussed with the Governance Lead.

As part of the onboarding process, all local governors and trustees must complete on appointment, and then on a yearly basis, the mandatory safeguarding training provided by the Clerk/Governance

Lead, as well as the latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance. GDPR and Cyber Security training are also annual mandatory training and new appointments will be directed to this. The Trust has asked that Induction training also be a mandatory item when Governors and Trustees begin their term, both of which can be accessed via [the Key](#). Local Governors and Trustees must record completion of all mandatory training on Governor Hub.

Induction

OAK Trust recognises the importance of a structured and comprehensive induction process for all Trustees and Governors. This is facilitated by the Local Clerk/Governance Lead, Headteacher/CEO and the Chair of LGB/Chair of Trustees respectively. This includes:

- Welcome with Headteacher/CEO and Chair
- Visit with the schools
- Provision of Academy trust Handbook for Trustees
- Introduction and access to Governor Hub – a file-sharing platform
- Access to the Key for Governance – up to date virtual training and articles, including all national updates to Governance and Education
- Provision of key documents including Code of Conduct, policies and previous minutes
- Access to the National Governance Association (NGA) 'Learning Link' – training and development for Governors, Trustees and Governance Leads. View a complete list of training modules.
- Access to the Leicestershire Governor Support and Development – comprehensive training and support programme and local updates and training opportunities.

OAK Trust recommends that all Governors and Trustees monitor training opportunities (see Appendix 6). The Governance Lead and Local Clerks will keep Governors and Trustees updated on current courses but Governors and Trustees should keep themselves up-to-date. Training logs should be updated on Governor Hub when training has been completed. Although only certain training areas are compulsory, the Trust strongly advises that Governors and Trustees continue to uptake training on offer particularly when specific to a certain role. New Governors and Trustees will be expected to show commitment to increasing their effectiveness through continuing professional development.

New Trustees and Governors will receive a separate induction document complete with a checklist to ensure all statutory and procedural requirements are complete within the correct time frame.

Support

The Trust's leadership team will always be the principal source of support for governance. The Governance Lead can be contacted by email at dbenyon-payne@oaktrust.org

The Trust also provides:

- Guidance, including this handbook and an induction handbook
- Termly Chairs of Governors meetings
- A report following each Trust Board meeting to update Local Governors
- A weekly newsletter containing all sector updates, news, guides and upcoming training
- Governor Hub, the Key, NGA and Local Governor Support services
- Support and answers to queries
- Assistance with Panels when required

Other forms of training

Access training from GovernorHub

Governor Hub has a range of on-demand training courses, useful for the upskilling of trustees and governors. These will help them learn in bitesize chunks, whenever best suits them, with best practice and examples from governance experts.

Once they pass the final assessment on the Governor Hub courses, they will receive a certificate, which will appear in their GovernorHub training record.

To fulfil their statutory safeguarding training requirement, any governor or trustee can take a Governor Hub safeguarding for governance course. They can supplement this with training on the Prevent duty and safer recruitment, suitable for all Governors and Trustees.

There are a range of other courses, so the whole board can upskill:

- Pupil premium
- Health and safety link governor
- SEND link governor
- Safeguarding link governor

There is specific training for staff governors and parent governors/trustees too.

Leicestershire Governor Development Service

All schools are members of this service.

[Leicestershire Traded Services](#) – log in and go to 'resources' tab for full training schedule.

Governors and Trustees should be added to this when appointed; if Governors/Trustees do not have access, they should advise their Clerk/Governance Lead. Governors and Trustees can also sign-up here: [New Account Request | Leicestershire Traded Services](#).

NGA / Learning Link

As part of the LTS (above), Schools and Trustees also have access to the Learning Link: [Learning Link e-learning for school governors and trustees | National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](#) which contains excellent resources for specific and general areas of governance. Governors and Trustees will need to register: [Registration - Enable \(vc-enable.co.uk\)](#) and choose their school (Trustees should choose Manor High). The NGA will send a confirmation email.

Governors for Schools: Free e-learning sessions and webinars

Governors and Trustees can register for free, and subscribe to receive information about upcoming webinars: [Online training and support for governors - Governors for Schools](#)

Confederation of Schools Trust (CST) Support

The Trustees receive updates from the CST and have access to relevant training if they register with the CST using the OAK membership number. Please contact the Governance Lead for this information.

[Trustees and Governance Leaders Professional Community \(cstuk.org.uk\)](#)

Governor Visits

Governors should attend Governor visit days whenever possible and are expected to visit the school in order to fulfil their responsibility for the conduct of the school and to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day operation of the school. A visit may be undertaken to:

- improve LGB knowledge of the school and the people who work in it
- assist the LGB in monitoring the implementation of aspects of the School Improvement Plan
- assist the LGB in making informed decisions
- assist a link governor gain knowledge of their specialist area

Governor visit days are jointly organised by the school and LGB Chair. The arrangements should have as a minimum:

- a clear agreed focus understood by staff and Governors in advance

- a programme of the visit available in advance to all Governors and members of staff involved
- guidance for Governors on what they are observing
- links to the SIP highlighted and described
- standardised methods of recording Governors' observations
- agreed discussion topics with staff or students
- governor feedback forms for the school

Governor visit days are also ideal opportunities for Link Governors to meet with their designated member of staff. A report on every visit, group or individual, is given at the next LGB meeting and kept in the minutes.

For Trustee visits, arrangements will be discussed and agreed between the Headteacher and the individual Trustee. Schools will make every effort to accommodate the request but may not always be able to agree to specific dates, times or site visits.

Effective Questioning

The most useful way to go about undertaking the core functions of effective governance, and in particular that of holding senior leaders to account for the running of the school, is by asking good, challenging questions in meetings and during school visits.

Asking challenging questions helps Governors and Trustees to gain clarity and test assumptions. It is essential to setting strategic goals, monitoring progress and meeting wider governing board responsibilities.

As Governors and Trustees gain experience and confidence, the type of questions asked and the way in which they are asked will change. Refer to NGA's example questions to ask (Appendix 10) and if in doubt, keep in mind that every question you ask should centre around impact on pupils.

Communication

The Governance Lead will share a weekly newsletter to Trustees and Governors which will contain information on training opportunities as well as current information on governance.

The Governance Lead provides Trustee updates to the LGBs following each Trust Board meeting, and local Clerks are expected to provide a short update following each LGB meeting, to feed back to Trustees.

Chairs of Governors will meet with the CEO and Chair of Trustees once a term, to receive any relevant updates. LGBs will be given a specific item(s) to feed back on at each meeting.

GovernorHub is used by LGBs and local Clerks, and updates are also shared on there from Trustees and the Governance Lead. Governors and Trustees should therefore expect to use GovernorHub as their main sharing platform.

Appendix 1: Trustee and Member details

Members

Phillipa Hunt
Maurice Galton
Khalid Karim
Damian Thurston
Ross Grant

Trustees

Name	Position	Committee
Jane Doughty	Chair	Chair of Governors
	Careers Trustee	Remunerations
		HR/ Finance, Audit and Risk
Jat Kaur	Safeguarding Trustee	HR/ Finance, Audit and Risk
		Remunerations
Jaina Parmar		Curriculum and Standards
Dina Nathwani		Curriculum and Standards
Farhan Adam		Curriculum and Standards (Chair)
Manjinder Sangha		Finance, Audit and Risk
Emma Orriss		Finance, Audit and Risk (Chair)
Sean Morris	Vice-Chair	Finance, Audit and Risk
	SEND Trustee	
Paul Watson		Curriculum and Standards

Appendix 2: LGB Terms of Reference

Introduction

Each school within the Trust has a Local Governing Body (LGB), which is a sub-committee of the Board of Directors. The Local Governing Body Terms of Reference are shown below and should be read alongside the grid supplement to the SoD which seeks to exemplify the responsibilities of the LGB alongside those of the Executive and the Trust Board.

The LGB plays a key role in the life of each school. The LGB is responsible for overseeing school objectives, working with the executive team, the Headteacher and SLT of the school to improve quality and to ensure that the school remains at the centre of community life.

In this respect, the LGBs main functions are to:

- Act as a key link between the school, parents and local community and champion the work of the school within the local community. The LGB is a subcommittee of the Trust Board and therefore an advocate for the school within the local community and a board which represents the values and aims of the trust in supporting and challenging the Headteacher and leadership team in a constructive manner.
- Provide constructive challenge to the Headteacher and SLT as they plan the future development of the school, and retain a focus on continual school improvement
- Support the development of the School Improvement Plan, self-evaluation processes, and any determined action plans;
- Continuously review the overall impact of the school amongst the community it exists to serve and make plans for improvement.
- Ensure that the school plays a full role in working together with other schools in the Trust and contributes to the work of the wider Trust
- Oversee the implementation of, and ensure compliance with, Trust policies locally with a particular focus on Safeguarding and Health & Safety

Strategic priorities for LGBs include:

School Improvement and Inclusion

- To appoint a duly agreed Chair and Vice Chair qualified to lead the work of the LGB
- Monitor educational results and achievement against agreed targets, including agreeing planned strategies to raise standards for vulnerable groups and monitoring progress and impact;
- To be the 'eyes and ears on the ground', working with the Headteacher, Trust Primary T&L Lead and Director of School & People Development to monitor and understand the curriculum and learning environment / experience for learners to effectively support and challenge the Headteacher and SLT in this role.
- Review the School Development Plan and to monitor progress and impact for learners.
- Monitor implementation of any post Ofsted action plans
- To oversee the school's approach to inclusion and monitor progress and impact
- To ensure Prevent and other relevant training is provided to all LGB members

Safeguarding

- To appoint from its members a designated Child Protection and Safeguarding representative;
- To ensure safeguarding training is delivered to all LGB Members
- To approve the school Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and monitor implementation
- To monitor the Single Central Record for compliance in line with the SCR and Safer-recruitment Policy
- To oversee safeguarding practice in accordance with Trust responsibilities and expectations;
- To ensure that safeguarding points of contact are visible at all times, including while school is closed, and that there is a procedure for appropriately escalating any safeguarding concerns, including whilst the school is closed

Recruitment and Retention of staff

- To receive staffing updates and monitor the impact on education and learning;
- To ensure that staff appointment processes managed in school meet the standards set out in the Trust SCR and Safer-recruitment Policy

Facilities, ICT and Estates

- To appoint from its members a designated Health and Safety representative
- To receive Facilities, ICT, Health and Safety, and Estates reports and monitor the impact on education and learning

Community, governance and local issues

- To monitor the implementation of Trust policies in the school
- To review school specific policies, publications and website content and ensure school compliance
- To quality assure the implementation of all policies locally

- To ensure strong community relations and representation within the school
- With the designated trust lead, review UK GDPR and cyber security compliance and undertake relevant training each year.

Finance and Legal

- To receive a summary of the approved academy budget for the academic year as agreed with the Headteacher, for information (autumn term).
- To receive a summary of the estimated year end outturn position to aid contribution to discussions with the Head teacher on development priorities selected for any surplus funds (summer term).
- To check and confirm that the Headteacher has applied pay grade changes in line with the Pay Policy.

LGB Membership

At OAK we believe in strong local governance arrangements, supporting active, informed engagement by the parents, staff, and other members responsible for acting as the link between the school and community.

We follow DfE guidance in respect of the membership of the school LGBs. This guidance indicates:

- The Trust (OAK) centrally appoints a majority of members of each LGB
- There should be a minimum of 2 parent members
- The school Headteacher is a member of the LGB
- LGBs can choose to have staff as members of the local governing body, but the total number of staff members must not exceed one third of membership

As per our Scheme of Delegation, each LGB must have a minimum of 5 governors, and we recommend a maximum of 9, although, at the discretion of the LGB this number can be increased, subject to the caveats above.

LGBs can appoint members to the LGB either via elections of eligible parents, or via selection through the Head / Chair, to be ratified by full LGB. The Trust Board may directly appoint members to the LGB. Additionally, the LGB may appoint Associate Members for periods of office that they see fit. These members will not have voting rights. In addition, members of the Central Team, or centrally employed staff, may attend LGB meetings. All appointments should be reported to the Trust Governance Lead for formal approval from the Trustees at their next Board meeting.

All Governors are required to agree to uphold the OAK Governors' Code of Conduct, and to sign it annually.

Composition of LGBs

Type of Member	Term of Office	Appointment Process
Headteacher	Ex officio	N/A

LGB	2-4 years	Approval by Trust Board, following completion of eligibility and nomination checks. Further to either: - Appointment following structured interview by Headteacher & LGB Chair, and ratification by LGB. Or - Elections held Alternatively, the Trust Board may directly appoint members to a LGB
Associate Members	As appropriate	Appointment follows interview by LGB Chair and Headteacher and ratification by LGB

Members recommended by the LGB will be reviewed by the Trust Board, where designation is not forthcoming, the LGB will reconsider and may wish to put forward further supporting evidence. The application will then be reviewed at Trust Board level when a final decision will be made.

In exceptional circumstances, an interim executive board may be required in a school. This would be appointed by the CEO with the approval of the Trust Board and would be expected to be in place for no more than one academic year.

Administrative arrangements

- The LGB will meet not less than once per term, with additional business meetings at the start of the year, and when required, by exception;
- The LGB will have at least 5 Members.
- The quorum for any LGB meeting is one third of members of the LGB +1.
- Members of the Central Team or centrally appointed staff may attend LGB meetings but do not have voting rights unless they are also members of that LGB.
- LGB Members will ordinarily be appointed for a period of between 2-4 years. Subject to remaining eligible, a member may be reappointed at the end of their term.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the LGB will be elected by the whole LGB and will serve for one year. Postholders are eligible to be reappointed.
- Clerks will be appointed from Syzygy whose responsibility is to work alongside the Chair and Headteacher to offer administrative support, and governance advice, in liaison with the Governance Lead to the Trust Board.
- The Trust provides guidance and support to the LGBs through the provision of draft agendas, supporting documents and reports from the Trustee Board.
- Governors will be given access to Governor Hub and LGBs are required to use this as a compliant form of communication. On Governor Hub, Governors should ensure their contact details are maintained and records kept of all training.

- Governors should ensure that mandatory training as advised during the induction process is undertaken within four weeks of starting their post, and within four weeks of the first meeting of each academic year.

LGB Calendar

Tools including representative agendas, term areas of focus, and model scrutiny documents will be provided to LGBs, including an annual skills audit document for use in the spring term. LGBs are able to add to standard agenda items and calendars at their discretion, provided items remain in line with specific LGB responsibilities.

The Headteacher will publish a calendar of meetings for each academic year in consultation with the Chair of the LGB and Local Clerk. LGBs will ensure that LGB Meetings follow the timetable of the Trust Curriculum and Standards Committee to allow time for reporting to that Committee. Dates should be shared with the Governance Lead by the end of the summer term each year.

Draft agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair and circulated to each Member at least 7 working days prior to the date of the meeting. Minutes of meetings should be circulated within 10 days to all Members of the Committee / LGB for information and will be reviewed and signed at the next LGB meeting. Minutes of the meetings should be shared with the Trust Governance Lead for reporting to Trustees.

Responsibilities of LGBs

Under the terms of the Scheme of Delegation LGBs are expected to work to an agenda of standardised items provided under the headings 'Curriculum and Standards', 'Health and Safety' and Community below.

Curriculum and Standards

- To be notified to, and provide scrutiny of, reports on the curriculum, pupil attainment and the quality of education delivery in school. To monitor the rates of progress and standards reached by children at each key stage, including the identification of any under achieving groups in particular through supporting the Growing Together programme of Quality Assurance as the "Eyes and Ears on the ground"
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement in particular through supporting the Growing Together program of Quality Assurance as the "Eyes and Ears on the ground"
- To understand indicators of pupil well-being and personal development, including attendance and behaviour, and to satisfy themselves that school planning and response is adequate in all respects.
- To understand and to support priorities for improvement at individual school level
- To be notified to the School Development Plan annually, and to receive reports on progress towards strategic goals outlined in the Development Plan

- To take responsibility for the promotion of safeguarding and the Prevent duty.
- Understanding the intervention strategies used and impact to support pupils particularly those resourced by pupil premium funding, other underachieving groups and vulnerable children.
- Understanding the intervention strategies used and impact of targeted grant Funding.
- Monitoring attendance including persistent absence
- Reviewing, monitoring and evaluating curriculum implementation through a range of strategies, including briefing and curriculum presentations, classroom visits, talking and listening to pupils, parents/carers and teachers in particular through supporting the Growing Together program of Quality Assurance as the 'eyes and ears on the ground'
- Reviewing children's welfare and social, cultural and spiritual development in the light of school curriculum policies.
- Promotion of well-being, community cohesion, British Values and the Prevent agenda.
- Working with school leaders to communicate the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the trust, school and to develop a culture of ambition.
- Implementing and monitoring the Sex Education Policy and Equality Information and Objectives
- Ensuring the needs of SEND pupils are met in accordance with any prescribed Education, Health and Care Plan.
- Compliance with the SEND Code of Practice and publication of the school's offer on the school website.
- Ensuring and monitoring compliance with Child Protection and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Receiving regular reports on safeguarding arrangements in the school
- Ensuring that looked after children are not disadvantaged by school policies and procedures and receive an annual report on their progress
- Receiving an annual report on racist incidents in school
- Overseeing arrangements for educational visits
- Monitoring the spend and impact of Sports Funding (Primary Schools)
- Monitoring the spend and impact of Pupil Premium

Health and Safety (incorporating estates and risk) and school priorities.

This section will be reported to the Trust Finance, Audit and Risk Committee as per the Scheme of Delegation.

- To ensure that the Health & Safety local policy is in line with the trust policy and is clearly visible on the school website.
- To ensure that all elements of the Health and Safety policy retained in school, H&S Planning and H&S records meet statutory expectations with reporting to the Headteacher, Central Team and Trust Board as required.
- Monitor to ensure that suitable risk assessments have been prepared and action taken to minimise risk,
- To monitor and review the risk register termly and then submit to the CFO.
- To be notified to reportable H&S incidents and other dashboard data including first aid incidents
- To make arrangements for Governors to inspect the premises on a regular basis

- To be notified of any other premises related tasks as delegated by the full LGB to be made aware of the school budget during the summer term to enable the LGB to make contributions to school priorities for allocation of available funds for the following academic year in collaboration with the Headteacher and the central team.
- To review recommendations made by the Headteacher in relation to pay progression, and to ensure processes have been followed.
- To ensure that the Risk register is being monitored and reviewed termly, and to review the top 5-10 risks as highlighted in the headteacher report.

Community

- To develop positive relationships with the wider community and to satisfy themselves that the school is fulfilling responsibilities as part of community life.
- Promote the individual ethos and values of the school and the wider ethos of the trust within the local community
- Seek to develop positive links with governors and stakeholders at other schools with a view to encouraging other school to consider discussions around whether our trust would be appropriate trust to join.

Reporting to the Trustees

Following each meeting, the Local Clerk to provide a report via the Governance Lead which includes:

- A short bullet list to highlight key issues and actions for Trustees to be aware
- Policies the LGB has approved
- Any queries or suggestions the LGB would like to raise with the trust
- Any new governors or re-elected chairs/vice-chairs for TB to approve

Amendment of Terms of Reference

This document will be subject to review at least once every twelve months.

Appendix 3: Trustee Board Committee Terms of Reference

1. POWERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- The Trustees shall establish the Finance, Audit and Risk and HR Committee as a joint Trust Committee empowered by the Trust's Articles of Association.
- The Trustees shall determine and approve the Committee Terms of Reference and shall review the Terms at the start of each academic year.
- The Trustees shall determine and approve the delegation of powers, responsibilities and duties to the Committee and shall review this Scheme of Delegation at the start of each academic year.
- The Trustees shall have the right to intervene in the governance of an individual Academy with the trust where it has serious cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget.
- The Trust Scheme of Delegation sets out the delegated powers of the Finance, Audit and Risk and HR Committee.

2. FUNCTIONS OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK and HR COMMITTEE

The Committee shall exercise the powers, responsibilities and duties delegated by the Trust Board as set out in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, and in particular:

Finance Terms of Reference

- to ensure the trust remains a going concern and monitor its longer-term financial stability by reviewing medium term financial plans
- to monitor the trust's financial position by reviewing the monthly management accounts
- to review financial benchmarking data and ensure action is taken when the trust's income, expenditure or workforce numbers are not in line
- to prepare and recommend to the Trust Board the financial section of the Scheme of Delegation
- to comply with relevant statute and regulation, the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, and the decisions of the Trustees
- to review and recommend for approval to the Trust Board the annual budget with a specific responsibility to ensure that budgets do not go into deficit
- to identify and propose to the Trust Board opportunities for the Trust to achieve financial and resource efficiencies to include the approval of contracts and purchases over the limit set in the financial regulations
- to support in the appointment of the trust's Chief Financial Officer
- to prepare and approve policies relating to the Trust's financial governance and operation
- to monitor any financial management related risks as documented on the risk register
- to approve the budget forecast return outturn and budget forecast return 3 year prior to submission to the ESFA
- to ensure compliance with the Schools Resource Management Self Evaluation Assessment
- to ensure adequate financial due diligence has been carried out for any schools who may be considering joining the trust
- to ensure the Register of Business Interest is kept up to date with notification of changes and through an annual review, including broader business interests held by senior

executives, and that any payments to executives in relation to such interests meet the transparency requirements in the academy accounts direction

- to maintain oversight of the management of declared interests and ensure compliance in respect of any transactions that may cause a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest in respect of any third party or related party transactions

Audit and Risk Terms of Reference

- to prepare a report on the performance of the external auditors for the Trust Board and Members recommending their appointment, dismissal or a retender process
- to plan and oversee the statutory audit of the Annual Accounts for the Trust
- to review and recommend to the Trust Board the audited Annual Accounts and Financial Statements in accordance with relevant statute and regulation
- to review and recommend to the Trust Board the Trustees Report that accompanies the annual accounts
- to prepare and recommend to the Trust Board and implement the Trust action plan in response to the auditor's management letter
- to approve the trust's internal auditor and scope of internal scrutiny checks to be carried out
- to receive internal audit reports and monitor action plans to ensure any control weaknesses are addressed
- to review the annual internal audit summary report prior to its submission to the ESFA
- to prepare and approve policies relating to the Trust's Estates management and operations
- to advise trustees on priorities, including health and safety, for the maintenance of the existing Academy buildings to ensure the estate is strategically managed

HR Terms of Reference

To receive advice from and provide support to the Director of Education and Trust HR Manager and provide a forum for input, discussion and feedback on HR advice relating to:

- HR Strategy
- People development
- HR and Employment Policies
- Equality and diversity within OAK MAT
- Health and safety and staff well being
- Staff feedback including from staff surveys
- HR Key Performance Indicators

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this committee shall be:

- At least 3 x Trustees including suitably qualified Trustee appointed as Chair.
- The Chair of Trustees should not be chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk committee.
- The CEO and CFO attend to provide information and participate in discussions.
- The Director of Education and Trust HR Manager to attend the committee to provide information and participate in discussions.

VOTING RIGHTS

All Trustees will have equal voting rights. In the event of an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by trustees each school year. The Committee shall, at their first meeting in the year, elect a Vice-Chair from among their number.

The term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee will be 1 year.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet at least four times a year to discuss finance, audit and risk. HR will be discussed at three of these meetings, with the meeting in June reserved for just finance, audit and risk.

QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be any 2 members.

ACCOUNTABILITY

This Committee reports directly to the Trustee Board which receives minutes, reports and recommendations from the Committee.

SECRETARIAT

Agendas, papers and minutes shall normally be prepared by the Governance Professional of OAK Trust, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the CFO.

3. Functions of the Curriculum and Standards Committee

POWERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- The Trustees shall establish the Curriculum and Standards Committee as a Trust Committee as empowered by the Trust's Articles of Association.
- The Trustees shall determine and approve the Committee Terms of Reference and shall review the Terms at the start of each academic year.
- The Trustees shall determine and approve the delegation of powers, responsibilities and duties to the Committee and shall review this Scheme of Delegation at the start of each academic year.
- The Trustees shall have the right to intervene in the governance of an individual Academy with the trust where it has serious cause for concern that there is financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Committee shall exercise the powers, responsibilities and duties delegated by the Trust Board as set out in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, and in particular:

Terms of Reference

- The Committee will seek assurances that safeguarding is effective across the Trust
- The Committee will have a good understanding of the quality of the curriculum and its impact, not least on standards achieved (progress and attainment) in each trust school, in order to support, challenge and hold individual schools (senior leadership and governors) and the Executive Team, (including the CEO) to account, for outcomes (including overall performance of the trust).
- The committee will receive reports from the Executive Team (notably the Director of Education) and Local Governing Boards on at least a termly basis which will include measures of attainment and progress along with updates on cross-MAT projects, their aims and their outcomes. The committee will use these reports in the first instance as a means of holding both LGBs and the Executive Team, to account for the outcomes of each school within the MAT.
- The committee will be as interested in other outcomes in terms of behaviour, attitudes to learning and the emotional, social, moral and spiritual development of pupils as well as their general preparedness for the next stage of their education or work. The committee will take particular interest in the following areas:
 - i. the development of the whole child, the consistency of experiences and opportunities to develop cultural capital as they progress through the MAT from the ages of 3-16

ii. transition between schools (within and beyond the MAT).

- The committee are encouraged to take an integrated approach to curriculum and financial planning so that they are confident about planning the best curriculum for their pupils and delivering the trust's educational priorities with the funding they have available.
- The Committee will provide advice on the effective management of any key risks the Trust is seeking to manage with regards to curriculum and standards and in safeguarding pupils.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this committee shall be:

- At least 3 x Trustees including suitably qualified Trustee appointed as Chair.

The CEO and Director of Education will attend the Committee to provide information and participate in discussions.

VOTING RIGHTS

All Trustees will have equal voting rights. In the event of an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by trustees each school year. The Committee shall, at their first meeting in the year, elect a Vice-Chair from among their number.

The term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee will be 1 year.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet at least three times a year but may meet more frequently as required.

QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be any 2 members.

ACCOUNTABILITY

This Committee reports directly to the Trustee Board which receives minutes, reports and recommendations from the Committee.

SECRETARIAT

Agendas, papers and minutes shall normally be prepared by the Governance Professional of Oak Trust, in consultation with the Director of Education, the CEO, and the Chair of the Committee.

Appendix 4: Code of Conduct

Introduction

At OAK we ask all Trustees and Governors to read and sign the relevant Code of Conduct at the start of each academic year. A copy of these Codes are provided below.

We believe in demonstrating irreproachable governance in our schools. It is the cornerstone of how ethos to supporting our young people and is synonymous with our ethics.

We recognise the huge time commitment that all involved in governance at OAK give, and we remain ever thankful for the willingness of so many people to give of their time, effort and expertise to support our work in schools. We do not take that for granted, but we also set high standards, and our Code of Conduct is part of holding ourselves to account.

Jane Doughty

Chair of Trustees

Code of Conduct for Trustees

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Trust and individual Trustees and Governors will operate.

The Trust accepts the following principles and procedures:

General

- We have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the Trust operates.
- We have responsibility for maintaining UK GDPR compliance across the Trust.
- We accept that all Trustees have equal status, and although appointed by Members and/or Trustees, our overriding concern will be the welfare of the schools and the Trust as a whole.
- We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so.
- We have to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all the legal expectations as, or on behalf of the employer.
- We will consider carefully, how our decisions may affect the Trust and schools.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a director involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust, attend regularly and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- We will get to know the Trust well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Trust activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the CEO, Trust Executive Team and other relevant agencies and the community.

Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board or its delegated agents.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Trust Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.

- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Trust we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.
- Our visits to the Trust or schools will be undertaken within the framework established by the Trust and Local Governing Bodies; and agreed with the CEO and/or Principals/Heads of School.
- In discharging our duties, we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our Trust and its schools.

Additionally, the Trust requires Trustees to observe the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life (Appendix 1)

Signed:

Name: Date:

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the Board, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the Trust or school arises outside of the Board.
- I understand that all Trustees have a duty not to discuss any item of Trustees' business outside the meeting.
- I understand that if a director is found in breach of his or her duty of confidentiality to the Trust, school, staff or to the pupils, the Board can decide to remove the Director.

Code of conduct for LGB Members

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which LGBs operate.

The LGB accepts the following principles and procedures:

General

- We are responsible for promoting standards in school, providing the supportive scrutiny which supports high standards in school.
- We will work with the Trust Board to help to deliver against OAK Academies Trust vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- We have responsibility for maintaining UK GDPR compliance across the School.
- We will provide support to the Principal and other senior leaders in their work to improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, contributing to the school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses.
- We will engage with key stakeholders, promoting the academy's standing within the community.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that a role as an LGB member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Academy, attending meetings regularly and accepting our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- We will get to know the Academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Academy activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and other relevant agencies and the community.

Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings but accept

collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board or its delegated agents.

- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Trust or academy when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Trust or academy we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust and member schools

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the academy arises outside of the LGB.
- I understand that all LGB members have a duty not to discuss any item of confidential business outside the meeting.
- I understand that if an LGB member is found in breach of his or her duty of confidentiality or other duty to the Trust, school, staff or to the pupils, the Board can decide to remove the member.

Additionally, the Trust requires Governors to observe the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life.

Signed:

Name: Date:

Appendix 5: How to use Governor Hub

How to record information on Governor Hub

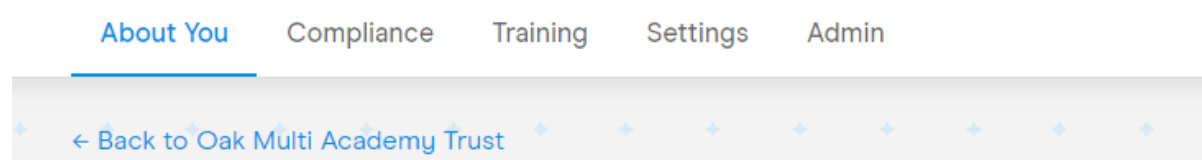
1. Log in to Governor Hub
2. Navigate to your profile

The items which will need reading and/or recording on Governor Hub 'Compliance' or 'Training' are:

- **Declarations of interest**
- **Code of Conduct**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – part 1 & 2.**
- **GDPR Training**
- **Cyber Security Training**
- **Safeguarding Training**

Compliance

For Compliance, go to your profile on GH and find the Compliance tab, next to 'About You':



Here, you can add your interests and keep them up to date, and update your confirmations such as KCSIE, Safeguarding and GDPR. Please confirm these each year. They are pre-populated so you only need to click 'confirm'.

Training

Next to the 'Compliance' tab is the 'Training' tab. Here, you can record any training you undertake as governor.

[About You](#) [Declarations](#) [Training](#) [Settings](#)

[← Back to Oak Multi Academy Trust](#)

Training Bookings and Registrations

You are currently booked onto or registered on the following courses:

Course title	Provider	Time	Location
No training recorded			

Training Records

You have attended the following training:

Add a new training record

Course title	Course date
--------------	-------------

Please continue to keep Governor Hub up to date.

Appendix 6: Training Plan

Training and Development Plan

On appointment	Developing	Experienced
<i>You have just been appointed as a governor or trustee</i> <i>Those highlighted in yellow are mandatory</i>	<i>By this stage you will have gained knowledge about the school/Trust and may have attended at least one meeting</i>	<i>By this stage you will be an active and confident member of the Board. you are interested in developing your knowledge in specific areas.</i>
(Trustees) Meet with CEO (Governors) Meet with Headteacher Must also do online induction training: (Governors) Induction for academy governors on local governing bodies GovernorHub Knowledge (thekeysupport.com) (Trustees) Induction for academy trustees GovernorHub Knowledge (thekeysupport.com) May attend some online seminars through NGA when appropriate and the Local Governor Development Service: Resources Page SLA Online (sla-online.co.uk)	Attend some online workshops via Leicestershire Governor Support service e.g., understanding Pupil Premium, SEND Governors, Greener Governance, Risk Management: Resources Page SLA Online (sla-online.co.uk) Complete online modules on Governor Hub or NGA Learning Link (For Trustees) May attend some online seminars through CST	Attend more specialised workshops via Leicestershire Governor Support service or NGA e.g. Governing Body Panels, Preparing for Ofsted, Effective Chairing. Complete online modules on GovernorHub Knowledge, e.g. Safeguarding Link Governor, SEND Link Governor. (For Trustees) May attend some online seminars through CST.
Complete Safeguarding for Governance Training	Update your Safeguarding for Governance training annually, as well as GDPR and Cyber Security	Update your Safeguarding for Governance training annually, as well as GDPR and Cyber Security

Safeguarding for governance GovernorHub Knowledge (thekeysupport.com)	(For Trustees) May alternatively attend ' The Trustee Role in Safeguarding Explained ' online seminar through CST.	(For Trustees) May alternatively attend ' The Trustee Role in Safeguarding Explained ' online seminar through CST.
Look at documents provided on Governor Hub in the Induction folder (Trustees) or relevant school folders on Governor Hub and shared resources area (Governors)	Continuous development e.g., newsletters, further training, podcasts, webinars and e-learning. Schools and Trust have training budgets to attend wider training e.g. IMET	Continuous development e.g., newsletters, further training, podcasts, webinars and e-learning. Schools and Trust have training budgets to attend wider training e.g. IMET
Visit the school(s)	(For Trustees) Visit the schools for example as part of the planned Growing Together Days (For Governors) Plan monitoring visits	(For Trustees) Visit the schools for example as part of the planned Growing Together Days (For Governors) Plan monitoring visits
Complete GDPR and Cyber Security Training on Governor Hub		Take on a role such as safeguarding, SEND, Chair or Vice-Chair

Your development journey: Local Academy Committee governors



This development plan provides a suggested pathway through Learning Link modules over the course of the governance year. These lists are not designed to be prescriptive - modules can be done in any sequence and can be started, paused and returned to at any time - but should help you decide which modules to complete during the year, and return to in subsequent years to ensure your knowledge is up-to-date. You will be able to find each module in the Learning area of your Learning Link account.

Essential

Undertaking these modules will give you a great overview of the broad spectrum of duties

Governance: Your role, your responsibilities, your organisation (2 hours)

Stakeholder engagement (15 minutes)

Safeguarding: The governors' role (1 hour 30 minutes)

Holding to account: How to conduct a courageous conversation (15 minutes)

Holding to account: How to question and challenge (15 minutes)

Could

These modules will enhance your learning and give you top tips for effective practice if these functions are delegated to you

Creating a new vision for your school or trust (15 minutes)

Compliance: Assuring your organisation, keeping it safe, secure, and solvent (1 hour 30 minutes)

Governance visits to schools (15 minutes)

Minimising Exclusions (15 minutes)

Your organisation: understanding school structures and what children should learn

Progress and attainment: using data to improve educational outcomes (2 hours)

Effectiveness: governance making an impact, changing lives

As and when

These modules are available for those situations when you have to undertake specific tasks or roles. Can be used as a refresher, or the first time you find yourself in a challenging situation

Ofsted inspections: Step-by-step (45 minutes)

Ofsted and the inspection framework (45 minutes)

How to: run an effective exclusion review panel (45 minutes)

How to: run an effective admissions appeal panel (45 minutes)

How to: run an effective HR review panel (45 minutes)

How to: run an effective complaints review panel (45 minutes)

Appendix 7: Questions to ask during the governing board self-evaluation process

16 questions for academy committees

Self-evaluation questions	Descriptors	
	<i>Tick the red, amber or green descriptor that best fits your board.</i>	✓
Governance culture The academy committee is a committed team, is well led and acts professionally.	Our committee is a team which collaborates with senior leaders and the governance Lead; we have the time required to carry out the role, our meetings are well attended, we undertake training and development and visit our school.	Green
	Our committee is developing as a team and mostly manages to give the time required to carry out the role with most meetings being quorate; some of us undertake training and development and are able to visit the school.	Amber
	Our committee is not yet a team and can struggle to find the time to carry out the role with some meetings not being quorate; a few of us manage to undertake training and development and visit our school.	Red
People	Our role description is clear and well understood and helps us recruit the right people from our community for our committee.	Green
	There is a role description, but it is not referred to or used.	Amber

There is a role description for academy committee members which is used to recruit new and diverse committee members with the right skills and who reflect our local community.	We do not have a role description.	
Size The academy committee is the right size for carrying out its role.	Our terms of reference define the right number of people for our committee to undertake the functions delegated to it.	
	Our terms of reference define the size of our committee, but we have concerns that it is not the right number for us to undertake our delegated functions.	
	We do not have clear terms of reference and so do what we think is right for the school.	
Governance Lead The trust employs a dedicated governance professional who provides advice and guidance to our academy committee.	Our trust's governance Lead is qualified, is up to date with our trust's governance structure and practice, is readily available to provide advice and guidance and ensures our committee is supported by a skilled independent clerk.	
	Our trust's governance Lead works primarily with the trust board and can be contacted; we make our own clerking arrangements.	
	Our trust does not have a governance Lead.	
Guidance documents	Our committee benefits from a clear and concise scheme of delegation and other guidance documents which are reviewed	

There is a range of trust-specific documents – including a scheme of delegation – that explains our role and helps us to fulfil it.	regularly after consultation with us – we would not be so confident that we are fulfilling our role without these.	
	Our scheme of delegation is generally understood but we would benefit from more guidance documents and training on how to undertake our role.	
	Our scheme of delegation is difficult to interpret; we do not have a clear understanding of our role.	
Induction and ongoing development There is quality induction for new academy committee members and a culture of ongoing governance training and development.	All new committee members get a comprehensive induction, and the trust ensures that we can all access quality training and development.	
	New committee members are given information and meet the chair and headteacher; the trust leaves us to source ongoing training and development.	
	New committee members learn on the job; at this level ongoing training and development is not required.	
Communication	Our committee chair meets with the trust board chair termly, and everyone involved with the governance of the trust and its schools attends an annual conference.	

Our academy committee is able to communicate effectively with the trust board and the trust's executive leader.	Our CEO attends one of our committee meetings each year and reports back to trustees.	Yellow
	We have no direct access to trustees; all communication is through the governance Lead or the CEO.	Red

Core functions

Values, ethics and culture Our academy committee understands and embraces our trust's values, ethics and culture.	Our trust has a strong set of values which we embrace as they define and drive a healthy culture; these do not preclude our school retaining its own identity.	Green
	Our trust has a set of values which we recognise but we have our own school values which we feel are better placed to drive a healthy culture.	Yellow
	We do not recognise our trust's values.	Red
Vision and strategy Our academy committee understands the part we play in our trust's vision and strategy for the future and how that shapes our school.	Our trust has a clear vision and we are pleased to play our part in the strategy for meeting it.	Green
	There is a broad trust vision which our school is supposed to take into account when setting our vision and strategy.	Yellow
	Our trust expects us to set our own vision and strategy.	Red

Support and challenge Our academy committee has a meaningful role in supporting and challenging the headteacher in order to ensure pupils receive a high quality education.	We are clear about the extent of our support and challenge role both within the school and the trust and we are involved in the headteacher's performance review.	Green
	We are generally clear about the extent of our role but it is more about supporting than challenging and only within the school and not within the trust.	Yellow
	We do not understand our support and challenge role and we are unsure how to get it clarified.	Red
Engaging with stakeholders Our academy committee knows its school and community, engages with stakeholders and shares their views with the trust.	We know our school well, actively engage with stakeholders and ensure their views are shared with the trust.	Green
	Some of us know the school and like going to events but systematic engagement with stakeholders is largely via the school's leaders.	Yellow
	We find it hard to find time to get to know the school well and rely on the headteacher to report what stakeholders think.	Red

Compliance

With policies	We have an up to date policy schedule which makes clear our role in policy setting and monitoring.	Green
----------------------	---	-------

Our academy committee is clear which policies it is monitoring and how to report any concerns to the trust.	Our trust deals with policies and leaves it to us to decide which policies we monitor.	Yellow
	We do not have a role with policies.	Red
Safeguarding Our academy committee has a good understanding of its role and responsibilities in ensuring pupils are kept safe and know how to report concerns.	We all understand our responsibility for ensuring our pupils are kept safe, are trained annually in safeguarding, have a named safeguarding committee member who reports termly on meetings with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the trust's safeguarding lead who provides assurance on compliance with the single central record (SCR).	Green
	We are aware of the importance of safeguarding and have a named safeguarding committee member who meets with the DSL; new members are trained and the headteacher provides assurance on compliance with the SCR.	Yellow
	We get reports from the headteacher at our termly meeting.	Red
Risk Our academy committee understands how our trust manages risk.	We understand how our trust manages risk and how our school's risk register feeds into the trust's risk register.	Green
	We assume that our trust manages risk and at school level we are aware of operational risks.	Yellow
	Risk is managed at trust level.	Red

Evaluation and impact

Self-evaluation The trust ensures we all participate in evaluating our own effectiveness, each year action is taken as a result.	Our trust organises self-evaluation for us each year, report back the findings to us and consult with us on proposed changes that result from this process.	Green
	We are encouraged to self-evaluate but it is left to us to choose the best way to do this.	Yellow
	We do not see the value of or have time to self-evaluate.	Red
Evaluation of impact Our academy committee's role in governance is valued by both the trust and the school and has a positive impact on pupil outcomes.	Our support, challenge and monitoring role is taken seriously by the school and the trust and so we know our contributions are impacting on improved pupil outcomes.	Green
	We do our best to contribute, but sometimes it can feel like our role is bypassed by the executive and trustees.	Yellow
	Our role is not meaningful enough to make us feel like we are able to make a difference.	Red

Appendix 8: 360° review: Chair of Governors / Trustees

Chair of Governors: <https://www.surveyhero.com/c/chairofgov>

Chair of Trustees: <https://www.surveyhero.com/c/chairoftrustees>

Appendix 9: Governance Lead Appraisal

This form can be used for the appraisal of governing board clerks as well as other types of roles such as governance managers or company secretaries within an academy trust.

The appraisal of the governance professional will likely be carried out by:

the chair (for those employed by the school or trust or who are self-employed)

the relevant line manager (for those employed through an agency or through the local authority), with input from the governing board

The appraisal process

The appraisal process should support the governance professional to increase their effectiveness and undertake relevant professional development. An annual appraisal meeting should allow both parties to discuss:

their working relationship

areas requiring improvement

learning and development priorities

pay and remuneration

working arrangements and practices

The discussion should lead to objectives being agreed (we recommend no more than three), which are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). The objectives should reflect both the needs and priorities of the governing board and the governance professional. These could relate to the DfE's Clerking Competency Framework.

Advice on pay and remuneration

The appraisal meeting should include a conversation around the pay and remuneration that the governance professional receives, covering:

- the requirements of the role and whether they have changed significantly
- the level of service that is being provided
- the number of hours spent on the role in relation to the pay and remuneration received

While there is no standard pay equation to refer to, governing boards can refer to advice from their local authority and local school networks as well as the following:

- The Clerking Competency Framework
- NGA's research report: Putting a price on effective clerking
- National Association of School and College Clerks Pay and Conditions report

Development and appraisal form

This example form covers a twelve-month cycle. The form can be adapted as appropriate and used to help governance professionals at all stages of their career prepare for the appraisal meeting through self-review and consideration of development needs.

Governance professional role: _____

Governance professional name: _____

Name of school or trust: _____

Appraiser's name: _____

Appraiser's role: _____

Date of meeting: _____

Section A: Review of current performance

What is working well?

What might be improved?

What action and support are needed to enable this?

Main points arising from the discussion, including appropriate pay and remuneration:

Section B: Objective setting

Key objectives	Milestones and outcomes (how the objective will be measured)	Target completion date
----------------	---	------------------------

1.

2.

3.

Personal development objectives

Milestones and outcomes
(how the objective will be measured)

Target completion date

1.

2.

3.

Governance professional:

Signature:

Date:

Appraiser:

Signature:

Date:

Section C: Annual review

This section should be used to record discussion on the achievement of objectives that have been previously agreed or progress which has been made.

Key objectives	Your assessment of what you have achieved (include as much relevant evidence as you have)	Completion date
----------------	--	-----------------

1.

2.

3.

Personal development objective	Your assessment of how far the objective has been met	Completion date
--------------------------------	---	-----------------

1.

2.

3.

Appraiser's comments:

Governance professional's comments:

Governance professional:	Signature:	Date:

Appraiser:	Signature:	Date:

Appendix 10: Example Challenge Questions

Behaviour Questions

Department for Education (DfE) guidance on behaviour in schools sets out a whole school approach to behaviour where high standards and expectations run through all aspects of school life.

All schools are required to have a behaviour policy that supports effective behaviour management. Governing boards are responsible for monitoring how the policy is implemented and the impact on pupils.

Our behaviour questions are examples of the type governors and trustees might ask in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on monitoring visits.

The questions cover the following themes:

- the behaviour policy
- the training and support staff receive to implement the policy
- the support pupils receive to achieve high standards of behaviour

Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

1. Does the behaviour policy have clear objectives?
2. What evidence is there that the policy is working or otherwise?
3. How do you seek the views of parents and pupils when ensuring that the behaviour policy is accessible, comprehensive and clear on what is expected of all concerned?
4. To what extent has the policy served to minimise exclusions?
5. Do designated staff and leaders (some schools choose to assign a behaviour lead) understand their roles?

6. Are the necessary resources in place to support them?
7. How are school routines used to teach and reinforce the behaviours expected of all pupils?
8. How are adjustments made to routines for pupils with additional needs?
9. How are new staff inducted into the school's behaviour culture to ensure they understand its rules and routines?
10. What regular training on behaviour do staff receive?
11. How has this supported staff to fulfil their duties and functions as set out in the behaviour policy?
12. What support do pupils receive during transition, including induction and re-induction into behaviour systems, rules, and routines?
13. What support is provided to pupils with additional needs where those needs might affect behaviour?
14. What preventative measures are in place to prevent child-on-child abuse?
15. Do staff understand the rules around confiscation of banned items and the screening and searching of pupils?

These questions feature in our governing board [guide to effective behaviour management](#).

Curriculum Questions

Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

1. How does the curriculum relate to our vision for the school or trust?

Consider:

- what pupils should leave school knowing and being
- how this is reflected through the curriculum

(Faith schools will be guided by their founding principles, beliefs and denominational standards.)

2. What are our curriculum strengths and areas for development?

Evaluate:

- trends, patterns and issues arising from progress and achievement data
- feedback from pupils, parents and staff
- available research
- learning from other schools

3. How do we ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils?

Specifically:

- pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or high needs

- the most disadvantaged pupils
- looked after children
- young carers
- pupils from different communities
- higher ability pupils

4. Have we developed a broad and balanced offer?

This should include:

- full coverage of the national curriculum as a minimum
- academic subjects
- vocational subjects
- subjects that provide a rich and rounded education, including music, dance, design and technology
- subjects that provide life skills and promote active citizenship
- content and learning materials that reflect different cultures, their heritage and history
- promoting equality and diversity through all subjects, enrichment and positive role models

5. Do our curriculum priorities support recovery from the impact of COVID-19?

This discussion should focus around:

- the assessment of what pupils learned during the pandemic
- the assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on pupils' physical and mental wellbeing – where is support needed?
- the emerging curriculum priorities (short and medium term) to address any learning loss
- engaging families and local communities in these priorities
- resourcing requirements (including specific CPD for staff)
- use of funding allocated to support education recovery (such as catch up premium and tutoring programme)
- how remote learning provision is maintained and utilised to support recovery

6. What is the role of enrichment in our curriculum?

Consider:

- the availability of different learning experiences, such as clubs, societies, performances and volunteering
- ensuring these experiences are inclusive

7. How do we support and enable curriculum development?

Review:

- required staffing structure and allocation of resources
- how ICFP and benchmarking is used

- clarifying expectations of leaders, teachers and other staff
- planning, prioritising and sustaining appropriate staff CPD
- the CPD provided to support subject-specialist teachers to sustain high quality provision
- the CPD and support provided to non-specialists to ensure consistent delivery
- how technology is utilised to improve/enhance curriculum planning, delivery and assessment
- how teaching makes connections between different subjects

Engagement Questions

The following are examples of the type of questions that governors and trustees might ask about parental engagement in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on [monitoring visits](#) (as appropriate). Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

We recommend that you also read our [guide to parental engagement](#), developed in partnership with ParentKind, for comprehensive advice on this topic.

Overarching question: Do we keep parents informed and take account of their views?

- a) Are we meeting the statutory requirements on publishing information?
- b) How does the school communicate with parents?
 - i. How often? Who? For what purpose?
 - ii. How good is the school website as a source of information for parents? How do you know and how could it be improved?
 - iii. Should the governing body be communicating with parents?
- c) Do we ensure that parents are made aware of any changes taking place in school?
- d) When and how were parents last asked for their views about the school?
 - i. What did the results show?
 - ii. What action was taken as a result?
- e) How does the school development plan take account of parents' views?
- f) Is it easy for parents to get in touch with the school?
- g) Are parents directed toward Ofsted's parent view website?
- h) What is done to encourage parents to help their children learn?

- i. What is the school doing to provide support to/for parents to do this?
- i) How are parents informed about their child's behaviour (bad/good) and what methods are used to engage them (parents)?
- j) Why are parents choosing – or not choosing – our school?
- i. How do you know that? Are there better ways of learning this?
- k) Why do children leave the school before their final year?
- i. How do you know that? Are there better ways of learning this?
- l) Should governors be carrying out focus groups to find out more?
- m) What complaints have we had from parents and what action was taken as a result?

Pupil Premium Questions

The following are examples of the type of questions that governors and trustees might ask about the pupil premium in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on [monitoring visits](#). Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, informed by the barriers to learning at your school or trust, and the strategies and interventions for overcoming them.

We recommend that you also read our [guide to pupil premium](#) for comprehensive advice on monitoring the impact of pupil premium in your school or trust.

- How many pupils are eligible for pupil premium?
- How much pupil premium does our school(s) receive?
- How is this funding allocated?
- How does the attainment and progress of our pupil premium eligible pupils compare with other pupils and groups of pupils in the school or trust?
- What are the main barriers to learning for our pupil premium eligible pupils?
- How do we identify the support needed by particular groups of pupil premium eligible pupils (eg looked after children and pupils with SEND)?
- What is our ambition for the attainment and progress of pupil premium pupils?
- How are we engaging stakeholders, parents, staff and the pupils themselves, to share our ambition for what all pupils can achieve?
- What specific outcomes are we aiming to achieve with our pupil premium funding? (eg raising attainment, accelerating progress, improving attendance, increasing opportunities)?

- How does our strategy for spending pupil premium funding and our interventions compare with successful schools elsewhere?
- Are all staff aware of which pupils are eligible for pupil premium and our strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils?
- How are staff developed and supported to effectively implement our pupil premium strategy – are they receiving specific CPD?
- What evidence do we have to show that our pupil premium strategy is working and having an impact (eg progress data for pupil premium eligible pupils)?

Raising Standards

The following are examples of the type of questions that governors and trustees might ask about raising standards in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on [monitoring visits](#) (as appropriate). Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

Overarching question: What are we doing to raise standards for all children?

The governing board should know the answers to questions a) to k) from data sources, such as Analyse School Performance (ASP), the Ofsted dashboard and [Fischer Family Trust dashboard](#), and from internal data provided by school leaders, including the headteachers' report:

- a) How does attainment at this school compare to national averages and the government's floor standards?
- b) What, if any, impact does the context of our school have on pupils' attainment?
- c) How is the school performing in English and maths?
- d) How do children in our school progress compared with expectations?
- e) How does the school's performance compare to those for other similar schools?
- f) Which groups of pupils in terms of gender and ethnicity are the highest and lowest performing?
- g) How are FSME (ever-six Free School Meal), SEN and EAL students progressing compared with other students in this school, and compared with FSME students in other schools?
- h) How are low, middle and high ability children progressing and attaining?
- i) Which subjects are highest and lowest performing?

- j) Do we know how these results have been changing over the past three years: are we improving or not?
- k) How does attendance in each year group compare with national averages, and what are the trends over time?
- l) Does the headteacher's report give a clear indication of progress towards meeting the targets/objectives in the school development/improvement plan?
- m) Does the headteacher's report give a clear indication of pupil progress for all year groups and subjects in the school?
- n) What are the strengths and weaknesses of this school?
- o) How do we know that the information we have about our school is robust and accurate?

Questions for the board to ask senior leaders:

(some of these should be answered regularly by the headteachers' report)

- a) Why is progress in some subjects under national expectations?
 - i. What is your strategy for improving the areas of weak performance?
- b) Why is progress in some subjects or year groups better than others in the school?
 - i. What is being done to raise performance specifically in those areas which are under-achieving?
 - ii. What has worked well and can we use it more widely?
 - iii. How does this relate to the quality of teaching across the school?

c) Why are some groups of pupils (as identified above: by gender, ethnicity, EAL, socio-economic status, ability) progressing less well than in other schools?

i. What is being done to raise performance for those children?

ii. Are staff aware of which pupils and groups of pupils are underachieving?

d) Why are some groups of pupils progressing less well than others in the school?

i. What is being done to close this gap?

e) How will you demonstrate to the governing body that improvement is taking place?

i. Who in the staff group has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of different interventions and how is this done?

ii. Which interventions offer the best results and how does this compare with the cost?

iii. Are we learning from other schools?

f) For pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, are we meeting all of the requirements on their EHC?

g) How much progress are pupils with e.g. SEN, EAL, FSM making in relation to:

i. The expected level?

ii. The national average?

iii. The school average?

iv. Equivalent schools?

h) What is the attainment for pupils with e.g. SEN, EAL, FSM in our school in comparison to:

- i. The expected level?
- ii. The national average?
- iii. The school average?
- iv. Equivalent schools?
- i) How do we assess our pupils?
- i. How do we set individual targets for pupils?
- ii. What proportion of pupils are meeting their personal progress targets?
- iii. How do you know the targets are ambitious enough?
- iv. What is being done to help the individual pupils that aren't meeting their targets?
- v. What is the impact of that and how do you know?
- j) How is assessment and feedback used to help children progress and meet their targets?
- k) What strategies are in place to ensure the most able pupils are stretched?
- i. How do you know they are working?
- l) Is low attendance having an impact on pupil outcomes? (see also [question 7](#)).
- i. Are there any persistent late-comers – if so, what impact is that having?
- ii. Are there particular groups affected, such as children on ever-six Free School Meals?

- iii. What is being done to improve attendance and is it having an effect?
- m) Does the number of children arriving at the school after the usual intake affect their attainment and what are we doing to improve outcomes for those children?
- n) How do we support children arriving at the school to settle in and learn?
- o) How do we prepare children for the next stage of their education?
- p) Special Schools – How many P-levels of progress are children making compared to similar schools?

Staffing Questions

Governing boards have significant responsibilities for staffing in their school or trust, either as the legal employer or having responsibilities conferred upon them under employment law.

Boards carry out their responsibilities primarily by ensuring that staff-related policies are in place, are compliant and are implemented effectively. Policies should promote a positive workplace culture which supports, develops and rewards staff as well as tackling issues such as workload.

Detailed oversight of staffing usually takes place in [committees](#). Reports created and received by the committee, alongside their interactions with staff, should provide the governing board with the knowledge and insight it needs to question, challenge and make strategic decisions.

Our staffing questions are examples of the type governors and trustees might ask in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on [monitoring visits](#).

The questions cover the following themes:

- performance and pay

- the working environment
- staff development

Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

1. Are all statutory staffing policies in place? – See NGA’s [template policy schedule](#).
2. Do our policies make clear how performance and pay are related?
3. *Maintained schools* – is our [pay policy](#) compliant with the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document?
4. Do the performance objectives set for the headteacher/CEO and other staff reflect the strategic priorities for the school/trust?
5. Do staff have access to [the CPD they need](#) to achieve their objectives and to support professional growth?
6. Are regular (at least annual) surveys conducted of the staffing body? Does the governing board access the full survey results?
7. What does staff absence and turnover data tell us about the working environment in our school/trust?
8. Is [staff wellbeing](#) taken into account when a decision is made?
9. Do we promote a culture of [flexible working](#)? What benefits might this achieve?
10. Does the board have access to independent, external HR support to gain specialist advice and professional guidance when needed?

Values Questions

The following are examples of the type of questions that governors and trustees might ask about values in full governing board meetings, committee meetings or on [monitoring visits](#) (as appropriate). Consider how you might use these examples to construct your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

We recommend that you also read our [guide to Being Strategic](#) which explains the importance of well-defined values that are shared and communicated across the school or trust.

Overarching question: What are the school/trust values?

This is a question the governing board should take the lead on.

- a) When did we last review our ethos/values statement?
- b) Are the school's values reflected in its development plans?
- c) How do we publicise our values (e.g. are they on our website)?
- d) How do staff and governors promote the school's values in their conduct?
- e) Do students know what the school's values are?
- f) How do we ensure that students leave our school equipped for the next stage of life?
- g) Does the school curriculum reflect and develop our stated values?
- h) How do staff embed the school's values into their teaching? (see also question e)
- i) In faith schools – How are the school's religious/faith values promoted?

