



WILLIAM FARR
C of E Comprehensive School

Trust Board Committee Structure and Terms of Reference 2024-2025

1 The role of the Academy Trust, Trust Board and its Committees

The principles of governance in academies are not dissimilar to those in maintained schools. The Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and the governance arrangements are set out in its governing documentation (the Articles of Association).

The Trust Board, on behalf of the Academy Trust, is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. It aims to ensure that students are attending a highly successful school which provides them with an outstanding education, supports their overall well-being and provides them with a successful transition to the next stage in their lives.

It has three core functions:

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

The Trust Board

Sets the strategic direction of the school by:

- Setting the vision, values, aims and objectives for the school;
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objective.

Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:

- The effectiveness of the school in relation to external benchmarks;
- The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework;
- Progress towards annual priorities as detailed in the strategic plan.

Ensures accountability by:

- Ratifying the annual evaluation of school effectiveness;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school;
- Responding to OFSTED and other commissioned reports, where necessary;
- Ensuring parents and students are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate;
- Making available information to the community.

Appoints and performance manages the Headteacher who, with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff, will deliver the vision (through the day-to-day leadership and management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the Trust Board.

For the Trust Board to carry out its role effectively, Trust Board members must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as an accountable body by the lead professionals;
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The role of a Trust Board member

In law the Trust Board is a corporate body, which means:

- No Trust Board member can act on her/his own without proper authority from the Full Trust Board;
- All Trust Board members carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and;
- Although appointed from different backgrounds and with different skills, the overriding concern of all Trust Board members has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

All Trust Board members are required to act in accordance with the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life:

Selflessness

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

Integrity

Trust Board Members 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.

Management

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

2 The role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher, as the lead professional in the school, is responsible for its internal leadership, management and organisation, for advising the Trust Board members and for implementing the actions in the School Development Plan.

The Headteacher will be supported in the day-to-day leadership and management of the school by the SLT. A member of the SLT will take the role of Lead Professional in each Trust Board committee. S/he attends as a support professional and is expected to engage fully with the meeting, albeit without voting rights.

Incorporated in the role of the Headteacher and Lead Professionals in advising the Trust Board are:

- Formulating and reviewing the vision, values, aims and objectives for the school, for modification and adoption by the Trust Board;
- Formulating and reviewing policies for adoption by the Trust Board;
- Reporting to the Trust Board on progress, either at Full Trust Board meetings or at committee meetings, at least once per term;
- Completing school effectiveness reports that formulate the School Self Evaluation Document and associated strategic plan, for ratification by the Trust Board.

3 Full Trust Board membership and terms of reference

Membership: To be determined by the Articles of Association. The Headteacher will attend as an ex-officio trustee. Other members of staff responsible for specific areas may be asked to attend meetings to discuss with, report to or advise the Trust Board on issues pertinent to their roles within the school. Staff attendees, who are not governors, will not have voting rights. The Trust Board must have a Chair and Vice Chair, who will be appointed by the Trust Board to serve a term of one year.

Remit: The Trust Board has a strategic role, challenges and supports the school, and is accountable for its decisions. It should set aims and objectives and agree, monitor and review policies, targets and priorities:

- To monitor and evaluate the performance of the school by receiving reports from the Headteacher;
- To agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the Trust Board has discretion;
- To seek to fill vacancies as they arise and to appoint new trustees where it is possible to do so;
- To establish the committees of the Trust Board and their terms of reference;
- To elect the Chair of any Committee;
- To suspend or remove a trustee;
- To decide which functions of the Trust Board will be delegated to committees, groups and individuals and review these annually;
- To receive reports and ratify recommendations from any individual, working party or committee;
- To manage the school budget, consider the annual budget plan, consider and approve revisions to the budget plan;
- To ensure a policy review cycle is in place;
- To agree selection panels for Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher appointments;
- To set up a register of trustees' business interests;
- Reviewing and monitoring the SEND policy and its implementation.

Quorum: 3 trustees, or where greater, any one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the number of trustees holding office at the date of the meeting.

Frequency of meetings: One in September and then at least two other meetings a year.

4 Delegation of the Trust Board's functions

A decision about the delegation of Trust Board functions has been taken in the light of:

- The requirement for the Trust Board to fulfil a largely strategic function;

- The responsibility of the Headteacher and SLT for the internal leadership, management and organisation of the school ;
- The requirement for the Headteacher to comply with any legal and reasonable direction of the Trust Board in carrying out a function delegated by the Trust Board.

The Trust Board has delegated its functions to 2 types of committee, Standing and Routine, and to the Headteacher in accordance with the following structure and terms of reference.

5 The Trust Board committee structure and terms of reference

The individual committees are responsible for the functions that have been delegated to them by the Full Trust Board and operate under their own terms of reference.

The Trust Board will review the establishment, terms of reference, constitution, and membership of committees at least once a year (normally at the first ordinary meeting of the Full Trust Board in September).

The Trust Board must have a Chair and Vice Chair who will be appointed by the Trust Board to serve a term of one year. Each Committee must have a Chair and Vice Chair who will be elected at the September meeting of the Full Trust Board, to serve a term of one year.

All Trust Board Committee meetings must be clerked. Only when the Trust Board has agreed the minutes of these meetings (or within a maximum period of 4 months after the meeting) will the minutes be issued. All minutes can be circulated except confidential matters relating to individual staff, pay or students, which will not be circulated outside of the committee.

In the event of a tied vote the Chair of Trust Board or Committee Chair respectively will have the casting vote.

5 Additional committee members

The Trust Board may from time to time invite those with a specific interest or area of expertise to attend a particular meeting.

Consideration will also be given to inviting stakeholder representatives to become members of a committee, providing that a majority of members are trustees. The trustees may determine that some or all of the members who are not trustees may have voting rights.

6 Trust Board committee structure and terms of reference

Standing Committees

There are several Standing Committees, namely:

- Admissions;
- Complaints;
- Governor Support;
- Headteacher Pay and Performance Review;
- Pay;
- Pupil Discipline;
- Staff.

Standing committees meet only when required. Their terms of reference are as follows:

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Committee membership: The Headteacher and at least two other members of the Trust Board. (NB the Headteacher is entitled to vote whether or not she/he is a governor.)

Terms of Reference:

- To review the school's admissions policy, which will include the admissions criteria;
- To review admissions arrangements and to make recommendations for changes to the Trust Board;
- Ensure that the timetable for the review of the policy provides adequate time for the statutory required annual consultation with the Local Authority;
- Recommend to the Trust Board for approval the final draft of the admissions policy;
- To determine within statutory provisions and the Trust Board policy whether any child should be admitted to the school. This cannot be delegated to an individual.
- Annually review the Independent Admissions Appeal Panel's administrative procedures to ensure that these are meeting statutory requirements. Should these be found lacking or incorrect then the trustees are held to be (and named as) the responsible party (although the decisions made by the Independent Admissions Appeal Panel remain completely independent of the school).
- Where possible, contentious applications (both religious and other) will be decided by the Admissions Committee: however, this may be delegated to a sub-committee of not less than 3 trustees where it is not practicable to deal with contentious applications in the committee meetings. All members of the Admissions Committee will be welcome at these sub-committee meetings; the only requirement being to have not less than 3 trustees present.
- The power to seek appropriate advice from specialist advisers, as necessary, to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

Quorum: 3 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings: One in September, one in December and as required.

COMPLAINTS APPEAL COMMITTEE

Committee membership: Two trustees, and one independent member with no connection to the school.

Terms of Reference:

The committee will act in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure, agreed by the Full Trust Board and hear any appeals against the decision made by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) in relation to a complaint.

Quorum for above committees: 3 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: as and when required.

GOVERNOR SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Committee membership: Two or three trustees, including one staff governor.

Terms of Reference:

To take an independent view of what the school has done to support children at risk of permanent exclusion. To invite parents/carers and pupil to attend a meeting or meetings(s) to find out any mitigating circumstances or justification and to explore where the school and child goes from there. The school does not attend the meeting but sends in a written report, which goes to the panel and parents/carers.

If there is a future Pupil Discipline Committee meeting, trustees would not be able to be part of the panel.

Quorum for above committees: 2 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: as and when required.

HEADTEACHER PAY AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (Confidential)

Committee membership: Three Trust Board members, to be appointed annually by the Full Trust Board to carry out the review.

Terms of Reference:

- To complete the Headteacher's annual performance management review, with the support of an external adviser, and set appropriate targets allied to the School Development Plan;
- To agree appropriate professional development opportunities for the Headteacher;
- To programme at least two monitoring meetings to provide support and ensure progress to targets is appropriate;
- To make a report to the Estates and HR Committee in respect of its findings and recommendations in relation to the Headteacher's salary.

Quorum for above committees: 2 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: autumn term and mid-year.

PAY COMMITTEE

Rationale: To achieve the aims of the school pay policy in a fair, consistent and equitable way.

Membership: Any three members of the Trust Board (excluding staff trustees) who are available within the required timescales.

Role: The Pay Committee has full delegated powers to determine the pay of teaching staff, Senior Leadership Team (not the Headteacher) and support staff in accordance with the school pay policy.

Terms of Reference:

- To assess annual pay recommendations based on appraisals in line with the school pay policy;
- To assess threshold and post-threshold recommendations for teaching staff in line with the School Pay Policy;

- To communicate the outcome of pay recommendations to the Chair of Governors, Headteacher and the Resources Committee of the Trust Board.

Any appeals made against a pay recommendation will be in accordance with the school pay policy.

Quorum for above committee: 3 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: One in summer term.

PUPIL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Committee membership: Any three Trust Board members who are available within the required timescales.

Terms of Reference:

The committee will act in accordance with statutory guidance, the school's Behaviour Policy agreed by the Trust Board and undertake the functions of the Trust Board in relation to excluded students.

Quorum for above committee: 3 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: as and when required.

STAFF COMMITTEE

Committee membership: Any three eligible Trust Board members who are available within the required timescales. The Headteacher, Teachers and Trustees employed to work in the school are not eligible to be a member.

Terms of Reference:

The committee will act in accordance with the school's Disciplinary Policy and procedures, agreed by the Full Trust Board and undertake any procedure/hearing which may result in an employee who works at the school having his/her contract of employment with the Trust Board terminated, not renewed or be in receipt some other sanction in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

Quorum for above committees: 3 members of Committee.

Frequency of meetings for above committees: as and when required.

Routine Committees

There are 3 Routine Committees, namely:

- Ethos and Relationships;
- Resources;
- Quality of Education.

These committees are the Routine Committees through which the work of the Trust Board is accomplished. They meet regularly, as decided by the Full Trust Board and their meeting dates are published in advance. They may be called to an emergency meeting by either the Chair or Vice Chair of Full Trust Board, or the Chair of the respective committee.

Their terms of reference are as follows:

ETHOS AND RELATIONSHIPS COMMITTEE

Membership: At least three trustees.

This committee may have assigned to it appropriate members of the SLT, to advise it on aspects of its remit. Other members of staff responsible for specific areas may be asked to attend meetings to discuss with, report to or advise the committee on issues pertinent to their roles within the school. Staff attendees will not have voting rights.

Remit: To ratify the annual evaluation of Behaviour and Safety of Students

To ensure that the school meets the needs of the range of students at the school and promotes their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development by:

- Monitoring the school's Behaviour Policy;
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Policy reflects and meets best practice and statutory requirements;
- Monitoring school processes for improving the quality of care and guidance;
- Monitoring the outcomes of programmes designed to maximise the effectiveness of care and guidance leaders;
- Overseeing arrangements for intervention to support students at risk of underachieving and to support their progress;
- Monitoring and reviewing the school's policies with regard to school uniform (including the rights of children to wear dress and symbols which are related to religion);
- Monitoring all exclusions and ensuring that provision for excluded pupils meets best practice and statutory requirements;
- Monitoring student attendance and ensuring arrangements meet best practice and statutory requirements;
- Monitoring and reviewing the impact of the SEN policy on SEN students
- Monitoring the delivery of PSME, sex education and relationships;
- Liaising with members of the School Council, as appropriate;
- Ensuring that arrangements for reporting to parents meet best practice and statutory requirements;
- Monitoring provision designed to develop student's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development through enrichment activities;
- Monitoring the progression and destination of students when they leave school;
- Monitoring the extent to which the school has developed and implemented an effective careers guidance for all students, including vulnerable students;
- Monitoring how well leaders engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders and agencies to support all pupils;
- Monitoring the delivery of collective worship, Chaplaincy and monitoring arrangements for section 48 inspections.

Quorum: 3 members of Committee

Frequency of meetings: At least once per term and as and when required.

RESOURCES

Membership: At least three trustees.

This committee may have assigned to it appropriate members of the SLT, to advise it on aspects of its remit. Other members of staff responsible for specific areas may be asked to attend meetings to discuss

with, report to or advise the committee on issues pertinent to their roles within the school. Staff attendees will not have voting rights.

The committee will ensure that safeguarding is met across Estates, Finance and HR.

ESTATES

Remit: To ensure that the school provides, maintains and develops a healthy and safety environment for pupils, staff and visitors by:

- Monitoring and reviewing the school's Health and Safety policy, including regular risk assessment and any health and safety issues associated with the building and site;
- Responding to external inspection reports;
- Monitoring the school's emergency policy and procedures;
- Raising the profile and the importance of the built environment and its link to educational achievement;
- Oversee the drafting and recommendations of the School Accessibility Plan;
- Considering the need for improvement/extension projects in order to enhance the delivery of the curriculum or to provide for increasing numbers of pupils;

FINANCE

Remit: To monitor and review expenditure on a regular basis and ensure compliance with the terms of the Funding Agreement and Academies Financial Handbook, drawing any matters of concern to the attention of the Trust Board by:

- Providing input into the process of drafting the budget, based on priorities in the School Development Plan to present to the Trust Board for adoption;
- Establishing and monitoring appropriate policies and procedures for sound budgetary control;
- Reporting regularly on the school's finances to the Full Trust Board;
- Determining the financial delegation to be made to the Headteacher and or the Business Manager;
- Responding to any issues arising from the audit of the school's accounts;
- Ensuring that the financial implications of staffing decisions are explicitly identified, understood, budgeted for and that any unbudgeted items are pre-approved by the Finance Committee;
- Considering financial implications of policies or recommendations by the Headteacher;
- Recommending to the Full Trust Board the appointment or reappointment of the auditors.

HR

Remit: To observe all statutory and contractual obligations related to the employment of staff by:

- Reviewing and recommending staffing and employment policies to the Full Trust Board for acceptance
- Determining and confirming that the aims of the school pay policies are met and monitoring the criteria and procedures for all discretionary elements;
- Arrange for the performance of the Headteacher and SLT review annually;
- Having oversight of the school's contracts of employment and staffing;
- Ensuring the selection and screening of staff complies with all regulations and good practice guidance;
- Approving the school's staffing structure;
- Monitoring the school's support for support staff;
- Ensuring that the financial implications of staffing decisions are explicitly identified, understood, budgeted for and that any unbudgeted items are pre-approved by the Finance Committee.

Quorum: 3 members

Frequency of meetings: At least once per term and as and when required.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Committee Membership: At least three Trust Board members.

This Committee will have assigned to it appropriate members of the SLT to advise it on aspects of its remit. Other members of staff responsible for specific areas may be asked to attend meetings to discuss with, report to or advise the committee on issues pertinent to their roles within the school. Staff attendees will not have voting rights.

Remit: To ratify the annual evaluation of the quality of teaching and to monitor the effectiveness of development manager and professional development. To ensure that the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all students and enables them to achieve their full educational potential by:

Terms of Reference:

- To monitor how well students, learn, the quality of their work and the progress they are making and how well they develop reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills;
- To monitor the implementation of the school assessments;
- To consider curricular issues which have implications for staffing and finance and make recommendations to the Finance Committee;
- To annually review the appropriateness of the curriculum, offer in the light of statutory requirements, equality of opportunity, the achievement profile of students and best practice;
- To monitor school processes for improving the quality of teaching;
- To monitor the cycle of development management to review and develop staff professionally;
- To monitor the outcomes of programmes designed to maximise the effectiveness of curricular leaders;
- To monitor school support for NQTs and teachers new to the school;
- To ensure that arrangements for reporting to parents meet best practice and statutory requirements;
- To monitor and review the impact of Pupil Premium;
- To oversee and authorise the arrangements for school visits in line with school policy and legal requirements.

Quorum: 3 members.

Frequency of meetings: At least once per term and as and when required.

AUDIT AND RISK

Membership: At least three trustees.

Employees of the school should not be Audit and Risk Committee members, but the Accounting Officer and School Business Manager should attend to provide information and participate in discussions. The Chair of Governors should not be Chair of the committee.

Remit: To advise the Full Trust Board on the adequacy of the school's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and risk management arrangements, to direct a programme of internal scrutiny and to consider the results and quality of external audit.

Internal scrutiny

- Agree a programme of work annually to deliver internal scrutiny that provides coverage across the year;
- Review the ratings and responses on the risk register to inform the programme of work, ensuring checks are modified as appropriate each year;
- Agree who will perform the work;
- Consider reports at each meeting from those carrying out the programme of work and an annual summary report for the year ended 31 August to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress;
- Consider progress in addressing recommendations;
- Consider outputs from other assurance activities by third parties including ESFA financial management and governance reviews, funding audits and investigations;
- Have access to the external auditor as well as those carrying out internal scrutiny, and consider their quality;
- Oversight must ensure information submitted to DfE and ESFA that affects funding, including pupil number returns and funding claims (for both revenue and capital grants) completed by the school, is accurate and in compliance with funding criteria.

External audit

- Review the external auditor's plan each year;
- Review the annual report and accounts;
- Review the auditor's findings and actions taken by the school's SLT in response to those findings
- Assess the effectiveness and resources of the external auditor to provide a basis for decisions by the school's members about the auditor's reappointment or dismissal or retendering. Considerations may include:
 - the auditor's sector expertise
 - their understanding of the trust and its activities
 - whether the audit process allows issues to be raised on a timely basis at the appropriate level
 - the quality of auditor comments and recommendations in relation to key areas
 - the personal authority, knowledge and integrity of the audit partners and their staff to interact effectively with, and robustly challenge, the trust's managers
 - the auditor's use of technology
- Produce an annual report of the committee's conclusions to advise the Full Trust Board and members, including recommendations on the reappointment or dismissal or retendering of the external auditor, and their remuneration.

Risk management

The school must manage risks to ensure its effective operation and must maintain a risk register:

- Review the ratings and responses on the risk register and report back to the Full Trust Board, which retains ultimate oversight of the risk register, and must review the risk register at least annually;
- Risk management covers the full operations and activities of the trust, not only financial risks.

Policies

Anti-Fraud
Critical incident
Gifts and hospitality
Whistleblowing

Quorum: 2 members

Frequency of meetings: At least once per term and as and when required.