



Handbook for Local Governing Bodies

Samuel Ward Academy Trust

SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS
CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS
RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

Samuel Ward Academy Trust

Handbook for Local Governing Bodies

Foreword

A handbook for governors of schools in the Samuel Ward Academy trust was published in October 2016. This version is updated for October 2017 and reflects the growth of the trust and Government expectations.

The key principles of governance in this trust are:

- children come first in every decision
- no challenge is too much to drive improvement

Governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in the country and have an important part to play in raising academy standards. The role of the local governing board is key to the effectiveness of an academy. In 2016, Ofsted described common characteristics of what it described as 'stronger trusts' and included, 'clear frameworks of governance, accountability and delegation'. The trusts it described positively were 'able to draw on the expertise of a cadre of trustees or non-executive directors who use their range of skills and experience to monitor performance.'

Samuel Ward Academy Trust is a partnership of schools located on the Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire borders. We share the same values, face similar issues and are geographically close enough to support and challenge each other. We share a Teaching School and a Research School.

We recognise the unique characteristics of each of the communities in which we work and how they are reflected in distinctive school cultures. We encourage cultural diversity, celebrate the special qualities of each of our schools and recognise that communities to become sustainable must develop and grow. We look for what works and look to make sure that all children in our trust learn from the knowledge.

We are working to a partnership that respects, sustains and supports. Our model is about creating interdependence. We subscribe to a set of shared values, principles and operational processes that ensure quality education for all our young people. Our central belief is that every young life is special, open to possibility, gifted with the potential to change the world for the better but also bound by the limits of their own circumstances. Our ambition is to unlock the potential of all children, remove the barriers to aspiration and ensure that all our children succeed.

Governors play a key role in the success of our academies and the trust as a whole. We are proud to support them in their roles. This Handbook aims to set out their key roles and the trust's expectations that their work leads to children and young people having a better education than would otherwise be the case.

Dr Tim Coulson

Chief Executive

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1 Introduction

This handbook sets out what is expected of Samuel Ward Academy Trust (SWAT) governors and the support provided to enable all governors to excel in the role.

Strong governance is an essential element in achieving our aim of outstanding academies. We aim to develop and support our governing bodies so that they can competently discharge their three core strategic functions as defined by the Department for Education:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the principal/headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

In exercising their functions, the governing bodies shall:

- a. act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the academy; and
- b. be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

This handbook is underpinned by:

- The Governors' Handbook and Governors' Competency Framework provided by DfE, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>
- The UK legislation for Academy Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, which can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1624/contents/made>

The key principles of governance in this trust are:

- children come first in every decision
- no challenge is too much to drive improvements

2 The Governing Body

2.1 Composition

SWAT LGBs have had up to 14 members. It is widely seen now that 8-10 members is generally more effective and efficient and the model the trust is now working towards is 9 governors on each LGB. However, we are not looking to disrupt high-functioning groups of governors.

The local governing body (LGB) of each academy is appointed by the academy trust board and is a committee of the trust board. The LGB will generally include:

2 elected Parent Governors

2 Staff Governors, one of which is the Principal/Headteacher and the other elected,

5 Community governors appointed by the trust, 1 of which is identified by the Trust from the wider MAT community.

Where there are vacancies, the chair or clerk contacts the trust about filling this vacancy.

All governors are appointed by the Board of Directors as those who will preserve and develop the principles and values of the trust.

Governors, other than Parent Governors, can be parents of children in the academy. However, the total number of parents on the governing body in any capacity should be less than half of the total number of governors.

It is not recommended that co-opted governors are also members of staff. However, members of staff from other academies within the trust, as well as members of the Trust central team, can serve as governors.

2.1.1 Parent Governors

Parents, including carers, of pupils are eligible to stand for election as governors. Parent governors are elected by other parents at the academy. If insufficient parents stand for election, the governing body still has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient parent governors and may appoint parents.

2.1.2 Staff Governors

The Principal/Headteacher is a staff governor by virtue of their office. Other staff, both teaching and support, may become governors as long as they are paid (volunteers do not qualify). If there are more candidates than vacancies, staff governors are elected by the academy staff from a short list of viable and appropriate candidates. Any election that is contested must be held by ballot.

2.2 Eligibility

Any person over the age of 18 is eligible to hold the role of governor.

However, in certain situations, a person is not eligible to hold the post of governor, including:

- a. If a governor is paid to work at the academy and is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his or her employment;
- b. If a governor is the subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal, the outcome of which may be that the governor is disqualified from continuing to hold office due to bankruptcy, disqualification as a company director or other restrictions by law.
- c. If a governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of the academy or trust and has brought or is likely to bring the academy or the governing body or the office of governor into disrepute;
- d. If a governor is in breach of the duty of confidentiality to the academy or to any member of staff or pupil at the academy.

A governor may also be removed from the governing body if they have failed to attend a meeting for 6 months without the consent of the governing body.

2.3 Auditing Skills of the Governing Body

A skills audit is a useful way of assessing the skills, knowledge and experience of your governing body, the results of which can help identify any gaps required to deliver your core functions effectively so that appropriate training and/or recruitment may be put in place.

No individual will have all of the skills listed. The governing body is a team, and the purpose of the audit is to ensure that each of the skills is covered by at least one of the governors around the table. It is the intention to enable 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 governors' professional or personal lives.

When considering the skills listed, it is important to understand that governance is a 'thinking' not a 'doing' role. This means that the skills and knowledge sought are those which enable governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have focussed discussions which create robust accountability for academy leaders. For example, a governor might work in the construction industry, but it would not be appropriate for him/her to carry out a health and safety check at the academy. Similarly, a lawyer should not be asked to give free legal advice. Governance is a strategic role and governors must not be tempted to do the staff's job - management is the job of the academy leadership team.

Recommended Action

- Undertake an annual skills audit to identify desirable knowledge and skills using the template provided by the trust

2.4 Responsibilities

The Department for Education states that governing bodies have three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the Principal/Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

For an academy within the trust, these three core functions will be shared with the trust as follows:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;

The trust is responsible for setting the vision for the whole trust and the academies within it.

Each LGB is responsible for ensuring implementation of the vision and ethos within their own academy. The ethos should reflect the Trust values. The Academy Improvement Plan should reflect impact of the trust strategic direction within the academy.

- b. Holding the Principal/Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils;

This is a shared responsibility. The LGB is responsible for assisting with the recruitment and selection of the principal with the employer; the trust board having final approval. The board expects the Chief Executive and her/his team to work with the LGB on appointments.

Similarly, the LGB is responsible for assisting the Chief Executive in the performance management of the principal.

- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

The LGB is responsible for recommendations about the academy's annual budget and monitoring expenditure against the agreed budget. Some financial decisions will be recommended by the LGB and need board approval. These are set out in the schedule of delegation at section 8.

The full Terms of Reference of the LGB are set out in section 3. The trust board will review them annually and each LGB is expected to formally ratify the Terms of Reference.

Each LGB may choose to establish subcommittees/working groups, in order to spread the workload throughout the year. Model terms of reference for subcommittees/working groups can be found on Governor Hub.

Increasingly academy trusts are finding the committees needed by LGBs are to review exclusions, manage complaints, disciplinary issues, headteacher performance management and grievances. It is strongly recommended that governors assigned to these committees access appropriate training via Schools' Choice.

3 LGB Terms of Reference

3.1 Powers of the Trust Board of Directors

The Directors of the Trust Board shall establish the Local Governing Body as a committee of the Trust as part the Trust's Articles of Association (Article 100)

The Directors shall determine and approve the Local Governing Body Terms of Reference and shall review the Terms at the start of each academic year (Article 104).

The Directors shall determine and approve the delegation of powers, responsibilities and duties to the Local Governing Body and shall review this Scheme of Delegation at the start of each academic year (Article 105).

The Directors will look to change the governance of an academy where it has serious cause for concern including

1. Standards of performance of pupils at the Academy are unacceptably low
2. Serious breakdown in the way the Academy is governed or managed
3. Safety of pupils or staff is threatened
4. Financial mismanagement or failure to operate within budget
5. An individual governor or governors are not abiding by the Code of Conduct

3.2 Powers of the Local Governing Body

The Governors 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;

1. to carry forward the Trust's vision in ways that are appropriate to the academy's status, pupils, staff and community
2. to implement policies, plans and actions to comply with statutory regulations, the Trust's policies and procedures and the decisions of the Directors
3. to hold to account the academy leadership for the academic performance, the quality of provision and the quality of care
4. to recommend and monitor the Academy Performance Targets and Performance Review
5. to approve and monitor the Academy Development Plan to achieve the approved Academy Performance Targets
6. to oversee the financial governance and operation of the academy to comply with the Trust's financial regulations, policies and procedures, including proposing and monitoring the academy's annual budget
7. to oversee the strategic management of staff to comply with statutory regulations, the Trust's HR regulations, policies and procedures
8. to decide the allocation of places against the approved academy admissions policy
9. to establish the Local Governing Body Committee structure and to regulate their proceedings

3.3 Term of Office and Responsibilities of Governors

The Term of Office for all governors is 4 years. On appointment governors are each required to familiarise themselves and to agree to comply with;

1. SWAT Articles of Association
2. SWAT Governor Handbook
3. Trust Financial Handbook
4. The Schedule of Delegation in section
5. Current relevant legislation and guidance for Governors

Where governors continue following joining the trust, their term of office will be from when they started as a governor at the school.

3.4 Meetings of the Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body shall meet at least once per term at the appropriate times set out in the Trust Business Calendar.

The Governors will receive notice of each meeting and papers for the meeting 7 clear days before the date of the meeting.

Minutes will be signed by the Local Governing Body Chair at the next meeting to verify that the minutes are a true record.

Quorum for a meeting of the Local Governing Body will be half the number of current serving governors plus 1.

Each question to be decided at a meeting of the Local Governing Body shall be determined by a majority of votes of Governors present and eligible to vote on the question.

Meetings are not expected to last longer than two hours.

3.5 Appointment of the Local Governing Body Chair and Vice Chair

The Local Governing Body shall elect the Chair and Vice Chair.

The Trust Board shall have the right to remove the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

The term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair will be 1 year and they shall be elected at the first meeting of each academic year by a ballot, conducted by the Clerk to the Local Governing Body.

Governors will be able to submit written nominations prior to the meeting and verbal nominations at the meeting. A Governor can nominate him/herself for office and does not need to be present.

Nominee(s) will be asked to leave the room whilst the election takes place. If there is more than one nominee, the remaining Governors will take a vote by secret ballot and the Clerk will tally the vote.

If there are more than three nominees per office, the nominee polling the least votes shall be eliminated and a further vote taken. If there is a tie the Governors shall discuss the strengths of nominees and a further vote taken. This process will continue until a nominee polls a majority of votes.

3.6 LGB Committees

The Local Governing Body shall establish subcommittees or working groups as it sees fit to fulfil its powers, responsibilities and duties.

Subcommittees are able to make decisions on behalf of the LGB on issues within the committee's remit as set out by the Terms of Reference. Working groups are not able to make decisions but can make recommendation to the LGB for ratification.

The Local Governing Body will be able to invite up to two non-Governors to serve in Working Groups or subcommittees, subject to the approval of the Trust Board.

The Local Governing Body will set out subcommittee/working group Terms of Reference and membership to be agreed and reviewed at the first meeting of the Local Governing Body each academic year. (For model terms of reference see Appendices 5 and 6)

The practice for working group and subcommittee management shall be;

1. Agendas will be circulated to all Working Group members at least seven days in advance of the meeting.
2. Working Group papers and minutes will be available to all Governors (not just those on the Working Group).

3.7 Appointment of Academy Principal/Headteacher

The Local Governing Body of an academy shall lead the process to recruit the Principal/Headteacher with the support and representation from the Trust Board.

The Local Governing Body will set out the recruitment process beforehand, which shall involve appropriate members from the Leadership Group and the LGB will give their views reasonable weight in this process.

The Trust Board shall not unreasonably withhold their approval for the Local Governing Body to appoint a recommended candidate for Principal/Headteacher.

In the event the Trust Board does not approve the appointment of a recommended candidate as Principal/Headteacher, they shall provide a clear explanation to the Local Governing Body.

3.8 Appointment of a Clerk

The Trust Board shall ensure the appointment of a Clerk to each Local Governing Body.

3.9 Governor Expenses

The Trust Board shall set out a policy for payment of exceptional expenses incurred by Governors, subject to prior application and approval by the Chair of the Local Governing Body. The policy is detailed in the Trust Financial Administration and Control Handbook

4 Good Governance

4.1 Induction and Training

Our induction training provides all governors with a clear idea of what good governance means to the trust and how governors can fulfil this important role. It is run periodically and all governors must attend this within their first year.

From the autumn term 2017, all new governors meet with the trust's Chief Executive before taking up their post.

The trust also buys into Schools' Choice for governor training and recommends that governors maximise their take up of individual training to get best value for money for the trust.

It is strongly recommended that Chairs of Governors undertake the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL) Governor Leadership Programme. Please contact the Trust for further information about this course.

Recommended Action

- Arrange induction training from the trust for anyone who has not attended
- Keep a record of training courses attended by each governor
- Access additional governor training from Schools' Choice

4.2 Visiting the Academy

Governors are expected to visit the academy in order to fulfil their responsibility for the conduct of the academy and gain a better understanding of how the academy operates on a day to day basis.

Governors are reminded that they do not have an automatic right of entry to the academy and that the headteacher or principal has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the academy.

The LGB should plan their visits to cover a wide range of activities. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the headteacher or principal.

For example, a visit may be undertaken to:

- improve LGB knowledge of the academy and the people that work in it
- assist the LGB in monitoring the implementation of the academy development plan
- assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as inclusion
- assist the LGB in fulfilling its statutory duties
- assist the LGB in making informed decisions

Governors should not pursue any personal agendas or arrive with inflexible preconceived ideas. Nor should they make any judgements about pupils' work, any teacher's classroom practice or issues relating to the day to day running of the academy. Those are the responsibility of the headteacher or principal.

4.2.1 Planning the visit

Visits should be undertaken only as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the LGB or one of its committees and with approval of the headteacher/principal. The headteacher/principal should be kept informed of, and agree, the subsequent details of the planned visit.

If the visit is to involve any member of staff, then that member of staff must be fully involved in the planning through the appropriate member of the leadership group.

Prior to their visit, the governor(s) should fully acquaint themselves with health and safety procedures, including fire safety.

4.2.2 During the visit

Governors should always report to the academy office upon arrival and follow the procedure for visitors in order to provide a good example for other visitors.

If visiting a classroom, the governor should arrive at the time planned to avoid disrupting the learning process, and follow the agreed purpose of the visit. Governors must be aware that some teachers may feel nervous or stressful about having a visitor in the classroom. At the end of the visit thank everyone concerned including the children.

Governors should be aware of their behaviour and avoid any implication that they are inspecting.

4.2.3 Following the visit

After visiting the academy governors should:

- give some time and thought to reflection.
- write a note/email of thanks to all staff visited.
- complete a visit report on the agreed LGB template, outlining the purpose and results of the visit and share with the headteacher/principal and then governors as appropriate.
- raise any concerns sensitively with the headteacher/principal.
- consider what went well and what did not go so well with respect to your involvement in the visit.
- consider what you would do differently in a future visit.

The Visit Report should reflect:

- The purpose of the visit as previously agreed with the governing body and the headteacher/principal.
- Links with the Academy Development Plan or other academy priorities and initiatives.
- Comments on the focus of the visit.
- Any key issues arising for the LGB that needs to be raised in the next Full Governing Body meeting.

4.2.4 Summary of Protocol for visits

Governors visit their academy to enhance their understanding of the academy's work and to help fulfil their responsibilities of monitoring and evaluating the academy.

	Always	Never
Before	<p>Agree purpose of visit.</p> <p>Agree how much time or a timetable.</p> <p>Agree when you will discuss the visit with the headteacher.</p> <p>Consider practicalities (dress, parking, time of arrival, who to report to, how to make notes, breaks and lunch).</p> <p>Find out if each teacher wants you to contribute anything.</p>	<p>Turn up unannounced: You have no automatic right of entry to the academy.</p>
During	<p>Introduce yourself to staff and pupils.</p> <p>Note and praise the positive.</p> <p>Ask questions to increase understanding.</p> <p>Remain focused on the purpose of the visit</p>	<p>Walk in with a clipboard.</p> <p>Arrive with preconceived ideas.</p> <p>Interrupt the teacher.</p> <p>Make professional judgements about staff expertise (governors are not inspectors).</p> <p>Pursue your own personal agenda/focus on the progress of your own child.</p> <p>Monopolise the children's or the staff's time.</p>
After	<p>Thank the teacher and pupils.</p> <p>Discuss visit with the teacher.</p> <p>Write a thank you note to teacher and pupils.</p> <p>Compile a report (use framework if appropriate).</p> <p>Raise any concerns sensitively with the headteacher/principal</p>	<p>Leave without a word</p>

Recommended Actions

- Ensure a visit policy is in place (See appendix for model policy/visit template)
- As an LGB, agree a programme of visits for the year, with each visit linked to a specific purpose and/or relevant to the Academy Improvement Plan.
- Reflect visit programme in governing body meeting agendas to ensure that visit reports are submitted, reviewed and actioned.

5 Governor Behaviours

5.1 Embodying Trust Values to Build Confidence

We expect governors to promote and embody the trust's nine values that will underpin our mindset and behaviours behind everything that we do.

1. **COMPASSION** is about caring about others. It is about wanting to help those who are hurting.
2. **HOPE** is knowing and wanting and making good things to happen.
3. **JUSTICE** is making sure that we treat others and ourselves fairly.
4. **RESPECT** honours the good things that others and we do. It honours people and things of worth.
5. **WISDOM**. We gain wisdom through learning and doing. It is about knowing right from wrong.
6. **COURAGE** is being brave when we are scared. It is being able to act when we fear we may fail.
7. **RESILIENCE** is about being able to stay strong when things go wrong.
8. **INTEGRITY** is being honest. It is being trustworthy. It is being true to yourself and your beliefs.
9. **RESPONSIBILITY** is taking care of people and things that are ours. It is doing our duty for our family, academy, community and country.

5.2 Openness and Transparency

As a trust, it is essential that there is full confidence that governors and board members are putting Academy and Trust interests first and are not gaining financially or personally in any way from holding a position of such responsibility.

Conflicts of interest cannot be eradicated so it is important to manage them in an open, honest and transparent way. Governors achieve this through a Code of Conduct, provided in section 11, a Register of Interests that is reviewed annually and published on the academy's website, and through disclosure of interests at every meeting.

5.3 Disclosing a Pecuniary or Other Interest

Governors, directors and trustees must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations who might try to inappropriately influence them in their work for the trust and, by extension, the academy. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits or gains, whether tangible or intangible, for themselves, their family, their friends or any organisation with which they are associated.

They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships at every meeting where the interest exists.

5.4 Completing the Register of Interests

Every governor and director or trustee is required to complete a Form of Pecuniary and Other Interests. It is the responsibility of the LGB to ensure the Register of Interests is reviewed and updated annually and held as a central register, and that it is published on the academy's website.

5.5 What constitutes an interest

Your registration and disclosure of personal interests must be guided by your duty to act in conformity with the nine trust values, in particular justice and integrity.

5.5.1 A Pecuniary Interest

is an interest in a business or organisation (for example your employer, trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which you are associated) or a wider financial interest that you might have (for example trust funds, investments, and assets including land and property).

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if any of the following apply to you, your spouse or civil partner.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried out for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.
- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and the trust:
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land or other assets which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which has the potential to be of interest to the trust.

When disclosing a pecuniary interest, the name and details of the spouse or civil partner does not need to be disclosed because it is *your* interest by association.

5.5.2 Other Interests

are defined as those which could affect your judgement and objectivity when discussing academy or trust matters. These are interests that may not apply to all meetings and business but depend upon the content and agenda. These could include (and are neither exclusive nor exhaustive):

- A family relationship.
- An active interest in another school, academy or trust.

5.5.3 Conflict of Interests.

Whilst Governors are expected to leave personal issues outside the governing body and LGBs should not be discussing the day to day management of the school, on rare occasions, issues may arise that could result in a conflict of interest for individual governors. For example, a member of the LGB is related to a member of staff and the staffing structure of the school may be under review. The risk of such a conflict should be managed by the Chair and if he or she feels it appropriate, the member of the LGB can be asked to leave for that particular discussion.

You should declare your interest at meetings where it is considered relevant. If in doubt, it is better to disclose a potential interest than not.

5.6 Failure to Register or Disclose an Interest

The trust board may decide to suspend or remove from office any individual or group of individuals who do not follow these guidelines.

Recommended Actions

- Compile a Register of Interests by each governor completing a Pecuniary Interest Form

6 The Governance Annual Cycle

It is good practice to develop a schedule of work for the governing body each year. The following structure contains the typical items that recur each year. These items could be covered at full governing body level or at a subcommittee level as appropriate.

The trust recommends that you use this as a start point to produce an annual cycle of work for your own academy that can be developed and modified year on year. Each academy should also have a rolling policy review schedule that feeds into their annual plan.

6.1 Suggested Work Plan

6.1.1 Autumn 1

- Elect Chair and Vice Chair
- Ratify LGB Terms of Reference
- Ratify and sign Governors' Code of Conduct
- Approve Terms of Reference for Committees/Working Groups (as appropriate)
- Each Governor to complete and sign Pecuniary Interests Form
- Appoint members to committees/working parties
- Assign link governor roles *
- Agree/confirm meeting dates for the forthcoming year (if not already set)
- Review results of national testing
- Adopt the Academy Improvement Plan (or equivalent)
- Confirm Performance Managements Arrangements and dates for HT/Principal.
- Ensure appraisal arrangements are in place for all staff

*The Trust expects there to be a link governor for the following roles as a minimum: Safeguarding (including Prevent/LAC pupils); SEND; Health and Safety; Pupil Premium. Other roles should be determined by the Academy priorities and can include responsibilities for curriculum subjects, data and assessment, finance etc.

6.1.2 Autumn 2

- Agree target setting for the year
- Review expenditure against the agreed budget
- Headteacher/Principal's report
- Receive/discuss Analyse School Performance report (replaces RAISEonline Sept 17)
- Report on HTPM
- Review and discuss SEF
- Finalise any building projects for CIF funding

6.1.3 Spring

- Safeguarding report
- Review SEN policy
- Review expenditure against the agreed budget
- Initial Budget Planning for following academic year
- Determine admissions arrangements for 2019 (by 28th February)
- Update published information on how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and its equality objectives
- Review progress against School Improvement Plan

6.1.4 Summer 1

- Review expenditure against the agreed budget
- Conduct budget setting for next financial year by end of April Recommend
- Budget for approval and submit to Trust Board for approval

6.1.5 Summer 2

- Agree governing body meeting dates for next academy year and submit to Trust Board
- Review of results (if published)
- Self review on the year and gather evidence of governing body impact and achievements

The following items should be standard agenda items or addressed termly, whether at LGB or appropriate committee/working group.

- SEND
- Monitoring of Pupil Premium; progress of pupils and expenditure
- Monitor results and outcomes
- Review data to support end of term/year predictions for progress and outcomes.
- Monitor progress and outcomes for vulnerable groups
- Headteacher/Principal's report. Suggested minimum content:
 - Achievements
 - Outcomes
 - Incidents
 - Exclusions
 - Attendance
 - Staff training
 - Staff changes

The following items are not time specific but must be conducted once per year

- Governors Skills Audit to identify knowledge gaps and Training Requirements.
- Annual Child Protection report to governing body
- Report Pupil Premium and Sport Premium (primary only) spend and associated impact
Conduct termly and annual Health and Safety inspections and report to governing body
- Report to the governing body on how Year 7 Catch-up Funding(secondary only) is allocated and its impact and how Bursary spending in Sixth Form is conducted
- Review and ratify policies, as a minimum:
 - Learning and Teaching, that explains how the Trust Teaching and Learning policy is implemented in your academy
 - Attendance
 - Safeguarding including Prevent
 - Sex Education
 - Special Educational Needs
 - Health and Safety
 - Charging and Remissions

The following policies could be reviewed on a two or three year cycle, as appropriate to your academy:

- Home / School Agreement
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour Policy
- Governor's Allowances
- Educational Visits
- Fire Safety Policy
- Critical Incident
- Inclusion Policy
- Medical First Aid Policy
- Marking and Feedback
- Assessment
- Subject specific or phase policies as required
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Data Protection
- E-Safety Policy

Policies listed in the Schedule of Delegation in Section 8 should be ratified as standard.

Recommended Actions

- Develop an annual work plan if not currently in place
- Review policy list and set a rolling schedule for reviews

6.2 Other Governance Responsibilities

As well as the annual plan of work, governors may be called upon at any time to serve as part of a panel to deal with:

6.2.1 Complaints

6.2.2 Permanent Exclusions

6.2.3 Staffing issues such as grievance, discipline, ill health or capability

In each case, governors should be impartial and independent, following the appropriate academy or Trust policy.

For matters relating to staff, the Trust HR Director can provide further support and guidance. For complaints and exclusions, the executive team will provide support as required.

Recommended Actions

- Maintain a register of who is eligible to sit on governor panels and their likely availability

7 Support and Information

7.1 Support

The trust will always be the principle source of support for governors and governing bodies and provides:

- 7.1.1 Guidance, including this handbook
- 7.1.2 Governance review and audits
- 7.1.3 Induction training and pack for new Governors
- 7.1.4 A dedicated governor login area with information and guidance: Governor Hub
- 7.1.5 Support and answers to questions as required

7.2 Sources of Information

The Department for Education has a governance section at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/departmental-advice-schools#governance>

and the DfE Governor Handbook can be downloaded here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

General education news and resources can be found at the TES website, <https://www.tes.com/> where it is free to join and sign up for an email newsletter.

All governors on our governor register will receive a copy of the Trust Governance Matters newsletter every half term.

Recommended Action

- Download the DfE Governance Handbook and Competency Framework (see link above)
- Ensure all governors can access Governor Hub

7.3 Clerking services

The Trust buys into Schools' Choice for the following clerking services:

- 7.1.6 Local governing body clerking
- 7.1.7 Pupil disciplinary committee clerking

It is recommended that governors clerk their own subcommittee meetings because it helps improve understanding.

7.4 Trust Reviews of Governance (TRGs)

It is recommended best practice for governing bodies to have an external review of governance. This will be scheduled annually shortly before the school's trust review.

We have a structured approach to holding governance reviews that show what governors are doing well and identify the support and training that they need. The questions are based around the DfE Competency Framework and the organisation of the governing body. It can be conducted with all, or a subset, of the governing body and takes about two hours. The Trust Review of Governance helps inform the Leadership and Management section of the Trust Annual Review of each academy.

For governing bodies who want a deeper level of assurance, or who have specific areas that they want considered in detail, a full governance audit is available. An audit will go into more detail than the review, and the findings will be shared and discussed with the governing body. The audit takes four to six hours to complete and will be conducted by a National Leader of Governance. Following the audit, the reviewer will work with the Governing Body to develop an action plan for Governance.

Recommended Actions

- Contact the trust to arrange a Governance Audit as appropriate.

7.5 Ofsted Inspections

Ofsted inspections are an inevitable aspect of governance and, if well prepared for, can be a positive experience.

7.5.1 Grade descriptors

The full Ofsted inspection handbook is provided at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

Governance is judged as an integral part of the leadership and management of the academy. It is recommended that governing bodies read the grade descriptors for Effectiveness of Leadership and Management and look for evidence that will support a judgement.

7.5.2 Evidence

Evidence of the effectiveness of governing bodies can sometimes be difficult to capture in a clear, concise and compelling way. The key to evidence is to link the governing body actions and decisions to pupil outcomes and progress.

The evidence can be formulated in one of two ways:

- Starting with an issue or area that the governing body discussed and working through to the impact on pupils, or
- Starting with an impact on pupils and tracking back to how the governing body contributed to making it happen.

In either case, the result should be a short paragraph in the following format:

We looked at ...	
We asked ...	
As a result, the SLT/teachers ...	
The impact on pupil outcomes and progress was...	

Recommended Actions

- Develop at least one paragraph of evidence at the end of each year and file for future use at an inspection

7.5.3 The Ofsted Interview

The inspectors will want to interview two or three governors. Carefully choose the governors who can confidently handle the interview. Schools are only given a day's notice of an inspection so it is likely that not all governors will be available on a particular date so most governors need to be prepared.

The following questions are typical questions that Ofsted inspectors could ask governors.

1. What are the school's priorities, strengths and weaknesses?
2. What is your judgement on the outcomes for pupils?
3. What improvements have been made since the last inspection?
4. Can you provide an example of how you have assessed the impact of an initiative?
5. How effective is teaching? How do you know?
6. How is the Pupil Premium used? What impact does it have on pupil progress?
7. How do you challenge school leadership?
8. How is the school actively promoting British values and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain?
9. How do you know that the school is improving?
10. How do you/governors monitor the school development plan?
11. Are Performance Management targets effective in improving teaching and learning?
12. How does teacher pay reflect performance?
13. How is the Sports Premium used? What impact does it have? Is it sustainable?
14. How have governors satisfied themselves about the quality and consistency of assessment?
15. What impact has the governing body had on raising achievement at the school and improving standards?

Recommended Actions

- If you are expecting Ofsted in the next year, start compiling answers to the preparation questions.
- Contact the Trust executive team to arrange an Ofsted "What to expect" session for Governors.

8 Schedule of Delegation

The Schedule of Delegation sets out the delegated powers between the different bodies involved in the governance and operation of the Multi Academy Trust and member academies.

The delegated powers are broken down into different levels in line with the Trust's principles of governance, leadership and operation. The delegated autonomy for individual academies is aligned with the need for the Trust to fulfil its corporate responsibilities and accountabilities to the Department for Education, Education Funding Agency, Charities Commission, HMRC and Companies House.

The different levels of delegated power are listed below but it should be noted that not every task requires all levels of delegated power to be defined. Whilst the schedule is designed to be wide-ranging, it will not cover every task.

#	Task	Notes	Board	CEO	LGB	Principal/HT
	Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Consulted (C), Implement (I)					
1.	Governance					
1.1.	Approve Trust Articles of Association	Members only				
1.2.	Approve Trust Board Terms of Reference		A			
1.3.	Approve membership of new academies		A		R	
1.4.	Approve Trust Scheme of Delegation		A			
1.5.	Establish Trust LGBs		A		R	
1.6.	Approve Trust Committee Terms of Reference		A			
1.7.	Approve LGB Terms of Reference		A			
1.8.	Establish LGB committees/ working groups		A		R	R
1.9.	Appoint Chair of Trust Board		A			
1.10.	Appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of LGB		A		R	
1.11.	Remove Chair and/or Vice Chair of LGB		A	R		
1.12.	Appoint and remove Chair of Trust Committees		A			
1.13.	Appoint and remove Trust Committee members		A			
1.14.	Appoint and remove Clerk to Trust Board		A			
1.15.	Appoint and remove Clerk to LGB		A		R	

#	Task	Notes	Board	CEO	LGB	Principal/HT
	Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Consulted (C), Implement (I)					
1.16.	Organise calendar of Trust Board meetings		A	R		
1.17.	Organise calendar of LGB meetings				R	R
2.	Trust & Academy Performance, Curriculum and Teaching					
2.1.	Academy 3 year strategic overview/plan		A	C	R	P
2.2.	Academy 1 Year Development/Improvement/Raising Attainment Plan			C	A	P
2.3.	Academic Performance Targets			A	R	P
2.4.	Teaching & Learning Policy		A			
2.5.	Staff Development Plan				A	
2.6.	Trust Inset Days	Trust Minimum		A	R	R
3.	Staff Policies and Pay					
3.1.	Alcohol and Substance Misuse		A	P	I	
3.2.	Application for Flexible Working	Guidance	A	P	I	
3.3.	Capability		A	P	I	
3.4.	Disciplinary		A	P	I	
3.5.	Equality in Employment	Guidance	A	P	I	
3.6.	Grievance		A	P	I	
3.7.	Harassment and Bullying		A	P	I	
3.8.	Pay		A	P	I	
3.9.	Probationary and Induction		A	P	I	
3.10.	Recruitment and Selection		A	P	I	
3.11.	Shared Parental Leave		A	P	I	
3.12.	Staff Absence and Attendance		A	P	I	
3.13.	TU Recognition and Facilities Time		A	P	I	
3.14.	Whistleblowing		A	P	I	
3.15.	Appraisal		A	P	I	
3.16.	Leadership Development Programme		A	P	I	
3.17.	Code of Appropriate Behaviour		A	P	I	

	Task	Notes	Board	CEO	LGB	Principal/HT
	Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Consulted (C), Implement (I)					
3.18.	Staff Dress Code		A	P	I	
4.	Staff Management					
4.1.	Staffing, structure and grades			A	C	R
4.2.	CEO appointment		A			
4.3.	Principal appointment		A	C	R	
4.4.	Vice Principal appointment			C	A	R
4.5.	Senior leadership appointments			C	A	R
4.6.	Teaching and support staff appointments				C	A
4.7.	Suspension of CEO		A			
4.8.	Return of CEO after suspension		A			
4.9.	Suspension of Principal or Vice Principal			A	R	
4.10.	Return of Principal or Vice Principal after suspension			A	R	
4.11.	Suspension of teaching and support staff			C	A	R
4.12.	Return of teaching and support staff after suspension			C	A	R
5.	Finance					
5.1.	Trust Financial Administration and Control Handbook		A		I	
5.2.	Whistleblowing Policy		A		I	
5.3.	Fraud Policy		A		I	
5.4.	Finance Policy		A		I	
5.5.	Record of Financial Responsibility	(RoFR)	A		I	
5.6.	Gifts and Hospitality Policy		A		I	
5.7.	Scheme of Delegation		A		I	
5.8.	Fraud Policy		A		I	
5.9.	Asset Control and Accounting Policy		A		I	
5.10.	Bad Debt Policy		A		I	

#	Task Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Consulted (C), Implement (I)	Notes	Board	CEO	LGB	Principal/HT
5.11.	VAT Policy		A		I	
5.12.	Charging and Remissions Policy	Model	A		I	
5.13.	Lettings Policy	Model	A		I	
5.14.	Anti-Fraud Policy		A		I	
5.15.	Tendering Policy		A		I	
5.16.	Academy 3 year Budget Plan		A		R	P
5.17.	Academy 1 year Budget		A		R	P
5.18.	Central 1 year Budget Plan		A	R		
5.19.	Trust Annual Accounts		A			
5.20.	Trust Academies Accounts Return to EFA		A			
5.21.	Response to Auditor's Management Letter		A			
5.22.	Compensation payments up to £50,000	EFA over £50,000	A	R		C
5.23.	Academy times, terms and holidays		A	C	C	R
5.24.	Expansion of Academy (PAN or NOR)		A	R	R	R
5.25.	Extension of Academy provision (Nursery)		A	R	R	R

#	Task Key: Approve (A), Recommend (R) Propose (P), Consulted (C) Implement (I)	Notes	Board	CEO	LGB	Principal/HT
5.33.	Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy	Model			A	R
5.34.	Attendance Policy	Model			A	R
5.35.	Pupil Behaviour Policy				A	R
5.36.	Pupil Exclusions Policy	Model			A	R
5.37.	Short-term Exclusion					A
5.38.	Return after short-term exclusion					A
5.39.	Permanent Exclusions				A	R
5.40.	Complaints Policy	Model			A	R
5.41.	Admissions Policy	Model			A	R
5.42.	Academy prospectus				C	A
5.43.	Academy website	Model				A
5.44.	Academy name, logo & branding		A		R	
5.45.	Academy uniform	Trust Minimum			A	
5.46.	Academy Educational Visits Policy	Model			A	
5.47.	Extended services on-site				A	
5.48.	Pupil Premium Statement				A	
5.49.	Estate Management Policy & Plan				A	
5.50.	Health & Safety Policy	Model	A		I	

Governor Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations on and commitment required from all Samuel Ward Academy Trust governors in order for each governing body to properly carry out its work within the academy, trust and wider community.

All new governors are expected to sign to say they have read and understood this Code of Conduct at their first local governing body meeting.

ALL governors are required to sign this code of conduct annually at the first meeting of the new academic year.

The Purpose of the Governing Body

The governing body is the academy's local accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the academy and for promoting high standards.

The Department for Education defines governance by three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

At the highest level, the three core strategic functions of local governing bodies are shared with the trust as follows:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;

The trust is responsible for setting the vision for the whole trust and the academies within it.

Each LGB is responsible for ensuring implementation of the vision and ethos within their own academy. The ethos should reflect the Samuel Ward Academy Trust values. The Academy Improvement Plan should reflect impact of the trust strategic direction within the academy.

- b. Holding the principal/headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils;

This is a shared responsibility. The LGB is responsible for assisting with the recruitment and selection of the principal with the employer, the board, having final approval. The board expects the Chief Executive and her/his team to work with the LGB on appointments.

Similarly, the LGB is responsible for assisting the Chief Executive in the performance management of the principal/headteacher.

- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

The LGB is responsible for recommendations about the academy's annual budget and monitoring expenditure against the agreed budget. Some financial decisions will be recommended by the LGB and need board approval. These are set out in the schedule of delegation at section 8.

The full Terms of Reference of the LGB are set out in section 3. The trust board will review them annually.

The Samuel Ward Academy Trust values

There are nine trust values:

1. COMPASSION is about caring about others. It is about wanting to help those who are hurting.
2. HOPE is knowing and wanting and making good things to happen.
3. JUSTICE is making sure that we treat others and ourselves fairly.
4. RESPECT honours the good things that others and we do. It honours people and things of worth.
5. WISDOM. We gain wisdom through learning and doing. It is about knowing right from wrong.
6. COURAGE is being brave when we are scared. It is being able to act when we fear we may fail.
7. RESILIENCE is about being able to stay strong when things go wrong.
8. INTEGRITY is being honest. It is being trustworthy. It is being true to yourself and your beliefs.
9. RESPONSIBILITY is taking care of people and things that are ours. It is doing our duty for our family, academy, community and country.

It is the responsibility of our governors to work with the trust to fulfil the role of governor in the spirit of our values.

The Role of Governor

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- 8.5.1 Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- 8.5.2 Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- 8.5.3 Supported appropriately by the trust.

In law the governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- 8.5.4 no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body;
- 8.5.5 all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made,
- 8.5.6 although appointed through different routes (e.g. parents, co-opted, academy), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the academy as a whole.

Commitment to the Role

The role of governor is a privilege and a responsibility. The Samuel Ward Academy Trust takes the role of governor very seriously and, as a result, expects all governors to sign up to the following statements of intent on an annual basis.

The trust board may decide to suspend or remove from office any individual or group of individuals who disregard these statements of commitment.

General

- We understand the purpose of the local academy governing body within the trust asset out above.
- We are aware of the Trust values and undertake to reflect them in everything that we do.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the local governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly, appropriately and without prejudice.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the trust and the wider community.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy and the Samuel Ward Academy Trust. Our actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in academy activities.
- Our visits to the academy will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training where appropriate.
- We will engage with Trust recommended methods of communication, ie. Governor Hub, including the use of academy e-mail addresses where available.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully; the governor chairing a meeting is responsible for ensuring appropriate conduct at all times, and the other governors are responsible for supporting the chair in that role.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher/principal, staff and parents, the trust, other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of the governing body, staff, pupils, or parents, from any academy within the Samuel Ward Academy Trust.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
- We accept that confidentiality is enduring, beyond the time in office as a governor.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record all pecuniary interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Interests.
- We will declare all pecuniary and other interests in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.



Academy

Governor Monitoring Visits Policy

Ratified by the Local Governing Body: _____

Context

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Governors' role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress. The Governors visiting programme is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar. A Governor is encouraged to make at least one visit a year during school time and governors will often monitor an area of the School Development Plan in pairs in accordance with the agreed timetable.

Visits enable Governors to:-

- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning
- Evaluate resources and discuss with staff further requirements
- Gain first hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking
- Work in partnership with the staff

Before making a visit Governors will

- Contact the Principal and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
- Plan which classes will be visited
- Draw up a timetable for the visit with the Assistant Principal or subject-coordinator
- Assistant Principal and/or the subject coordinator ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

On the day of the visit the Governor will remember to:-

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the Assistant Principal/subject coordinator
- Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
- Be calm and enjoy the visit

After the visit the Governor will:-

- Remember to thank the teachers and children
- Meet with the Principal to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose
- Complete the Governor Visit Proforma, reporting on the focus. The completed form should be given to the Principal and then, after any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the governing body and staff
- Governors must report without giving opinions and where possible individuals should not be able to be identified.

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily.

The visit is not about:-

- Inspection
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- Checking on your own children
- Pursuing a personal agenda
- Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas
- Governors need to be mindful of confidentiality issues and will not discuss the monitoring activities outside the governing body.

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. It is important that Governors remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Principal and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full Governing Body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then Governor Visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the Governing Body, which will contribute to school improvement.

<Insert Logo>

**<Insert name> Academy
GOVERNOR VISIT REPORT**

Name:	Gov. Responsibility:	Date:	
Staff / class visited:			
Information gathered from: (please tick as appropriate)			
Attending an assembly		Meeting with the subject co-ordinator	
Looking at children's work on display or in their books		Meeting with SENCO	
Talking to children about their work		Looking at resources	
Talking to teaching staff		Looking at the buildings, décor and contents	
Talking to non-teaching staff		Climate Walk	
Attending playtime or lunchtime		Attending a staff meeting	
Meeting with the Principal		Other	
Objectives of Visit / Focus (eg Ofsted Objectives / Key Issue/Development are on SDP / Termly Plan):			
1.			
2.			
3.			
Brief notes / Points relevant to objectives:			

Evidence of School Values/British Values/SMSC (<i>Academies to amend as appropriate</i>)	
British Values:	Academy Values:
Positive Learning Behaviours	SMSC
Please briefly outline the context	
Up to three positive comments relevant to the visit focus	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	
Points to take forward for discussion at the Governing Body Meeting:	
Received and discussed with the Principal/Headteacher	
Date:	
Received by the Governing Body	
Date:	
Follow up action as a result of this visit:	

Good Governance Questions to Ask Your Academy

The following is a list of good questions that governors can ask their headteacher/principal and senior leadership team, in order to demonstrate robust challenge and accountability.

The list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive, but if they were put to the leadership team approximately once a year, across a series of minuted meetings, and the answers considered and acted upon, then the governing body would have a strong foundation for governance.

Vision, ethos and strategy

1. Where would we see evidence of the academy's values in action within the academy?
2. How would you describe pupil behaviour?
3. Where would we see evidence of high aspirations for all?
4. How do we know that our pupils are safe?

Educational Performance

5. Are standards at the end of EYFS and Key Stages {1, 2, 3, 4} declining or improving?
6. Are targets likely to be met? What evidence do you have to support your answer?
7. How do our predicted outcomes compare with external comparators such as Fischer Family Trust or RAISEonline?
8. Are the outcomes different for individual subjects/groups of children?
 - a. For example, Boys vs Girls, White, disadvantaged boys, Summer born children, Free School Meals (FSM), English as an Additional Language (EAL), Traveller community.
 - b. To what do you attribute the differences?
 - c. What additional steps are being taken to 'close the gap' for these children?
9. Do we need to make changes to current provision/resource deployment given the needs within each year group?
10. Are the right priorities identified in the improvement plan or Academy Development Plan?
 - a. How do you know?
 - b. What are the key actions/programmes/interventions planned to address these?
 - c. How will the impact of these actions/interventions be monitored/by whom/when?
11. What is the profile of the quality of teaching across the academy?
 - a. What is your evidence for this?
 - b. What steps are you taking to secure at least 'good' teaching in all classrooms?
12. How reliable/accurate is the assessment data which is used to track individual progress?
 - a. Are there any inconsistencies?
 - b. If so, what is being done to tackle these?
13. How often are pupil progress reviews held and how do these inform planning?

14. How would you describe the relationship between academy and parents? How can we increase parental engagement in pupil's learning?

Sound Financial Planning

15. Is academy budget allocation correctly prioritised? How do you know?

16. What proportion of your budget is spent on staffing?

a. Is this appropriate?

b. Is this sustainable?

17. What is the three year budget profile for the academy?

18. What factors do you consider when allocating spending each year?

19. How is our pupil premium and sports premium money spent each year?

Good Governance Questions to Ask Yourselfes

Self reflection and review is an excellent way to grow and develop as a governing body and demonstrate responsible governance. The following is a list of useful questions drawn up by the NGA that governing bodies can draw upon as part of an annual self review. These questions do not attempt to cover every aspect of effective governance but should prompt honest reflection on current practice.

Right skills: Do we have the right skills on the governing body?

1. Have we completed a skills audit which informs the governor specification we use as the basis of governor appointment and interview?

Effectiveness: Are we as effective as we could be?

2. How well do we understand our roles and responsibilities, including what it means to be strategic?
3. Do we have a professional clerk who provides legal advice and oversees the governing board's induction and development needs?
4. Is the size, composition and committee structure of our governing body conducive to effective working?
5. How do we make use of good practice from across the country?

Role of the chair: Does our chair show strong and effective leadership?

6. Do we carry out a regular 360° review of the chair's performance and elect the chair each year?
7. Do we engage in good succession planning so that no governor serves for longer than two terms of office and the chair is replaced at least every six years?
8. Does the chair carry out an annual review of each governor's contribution to the governing body's performance?

Vision, ethos and strategy

Strategy: Does the academy have a clear vision and strategic priorities?

9. Does our vision look forward three to five years, and does it include what the children who have left the academy will have achieved?
10. Have we agreed a strategy with priorities for achieving our vision with key performance indicators against which we can regularly monitor and review the strategy?
11. How effectively does our strategic planning cycle drive the governing body's activities and agenda setting?

Engagement: Are we properly engaged with our academy community, the wider school sector and the outside world?

12. How well do we listen to, understand and respond to our pupils, parents and staff?
13. How do we make regular reports on the work of the governing body to our parents and local community?
14. What benefit does the academy draw from collaboration with other academies and other sectors, locally and nationally?

Effective accountability

Accountability of the executive: Do we hold the academy leaders to account?

15. How well do we understand the academy's performance data (including in-year progress tracking data) so we can properly hold academy leaders to account?
16. Do governors regularly visit the academy to get to know it and monitor the implementation of the academy strategy?
17. How well does our policy review schedule work and how do we ensure compliance?
18. Do we know how effective performance management of all staff is within the academy?
19. Are our financial management systems robust so we can ensure best value for money?

Impact: Are we having an impact on outcomes for pupils?

20. How much has the academy improved over the last three years, and what has the governing body's contribution been to this?

SWAT Model Terms Of Reference: Curriculum Committee

Terms of reference for the Curriculum Committee

GENERAL TERM

- To act on matters delegated by the local governing body.
- To liaise and consult with other committees where necessary.
- To contribute to the School/Academy Improvement Plan.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all committee functions.

QUORUM

- Committees are free to determine their own quorum, but as a minimum this must be not less than three governor members of the committee.

MEETINGS

- Governing bodies are free to determine how often their committees meet – this may be left to the discretion of the individual committees and may depend on the circumstances of the school at any given time.
- Committee meetings will not be open to the public but minutes shall be made available. Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the committee considers confidential does not have to be made available for inspection.
- In the absence of the chair, the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number.
- In the absence of the clerk the committee shall choose a clerk for that meeting from among their number (someone who is not the headteacher/principal).
- The draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the full governing body and will be presented at that meeting by the chair (or in his/her absence another member of the committee).
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present and voting – but no vote can be taken unless a majority of those present are governors.

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND DELIVERY

- To review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum offer.
- To recommend for approval to the local governing body the:
 - Self-evaluation form
 - School/Academy Improvement Plan
 - Targets for school/academy improvement
- To develop and review policies identified within the school's policy review programme and in accordance with its delegated powers (e.g. sex education and pupil behaviour/discipline).
- To ensure that the requirements of children with special needs are met, as laid out in the Code of Practice, and receive termly reports from the headteacher/SENCO and an annual report from the SEN governor (where appointed).

ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement
- To monitor and evaluate rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including any underachieving groups
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance

- To set priorities for improvement, and monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans which relate to the committee's area of operation.
- To monitor and evaluate provision for all groups of vulnerable children (e.g. looked after children) and ensure all their needs have been identified and addressed, and to evaluate their progress and achievement.
- To regularly review and develop the Assessment Policy and to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.
- To consider recommendations from external reviews of the school (e.g. Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), agree actions as a result of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of the plan.
- To ensure that all children have equal opportunities.
- To advise the resources committee on the relative funding priorities necessary to deliver the curriculum.

ENGAGEMENT

- To monitor the school's publicity, public presentation and relationships with the wider community.
- To identify and celebrate pupil achievements
- To oversee arrangements for educational visits, including the appointment of a named co-ordinator.
- To ensure all statutory requirements for reporting and publishing information are met and the school website content is fully compliant and presented in an accessible way

SWAT Model Terms Of Reference: Resources Committee

Terms of reference for the Resources Committee

GENERAL TERM

- To act on matters delegated by the local governing body.
- To liaise and consult with other committees where necessary.
- To contribute to the School/Academy Improvement Plan.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all committee functions.

QUORUM

- Committees are free to determine their own quorum, but as a minimum this must be not less than three governor members of the committee.

MEETINGS

- The Governing body is free to determine how often the committee meets and may delegate this to the committee
- The Committee meetings will not be open to the public but minutes shall be made available. Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the committee considers confidential does not have to be made available for inspection.
- In the absence of the chair, the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number.
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- The draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the full governing body and will be presented at that meeting by the chair (or in his/her absence another member of the committee).
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present and voting – but no vote can be taken unless a majority of those present are governors.

FINANCE

- To ensure that the academy adheres to the Trust Finance Policy, guidance and local scheme of delegation for spending and budgetary adjustments (virements)
- To review, adopt and monitor all additional financial policies, including a charging and remissions policy.
- To establish and maintain a three year financial plan, taking into the account priorities of the School/Academy Improvement Plan, roll projection and signals from central government and (if applicable) the LA regarding future years' budgets, within the constraints of available information.
- To draft and propose to the Trust Board for adoption an annual school budget taking into account the priorities of the School/Academy Improvement Plan.
- To make decisions in respect of service level agreements.
- To ensure that sufficient funds are set aside for pay increments as set out in the Pay Policy and as recommended by the headteacher.
- To monitor the income and expenditure throughout the year of all delegated and devolved funds against the annual budget plan.
- To receive at least termly budget monitoring reports from the headteacher.
- To report back to each meeting of the full governing body and to alert them of potential problems or significant anomalies at an early date.

PREMISES

- To provide support and guidance for the governing body and the headteacher on all matters relating to the maintenance and development of the premises and grounds, including Health and Safety.
- To ensure that an annual inspection of the premises and grounds takes place and a report is received identifying any issues.
- To inform the governing body of the report and set out a proposed order of priorities for maintenance and development, for the approval of the governing body.
- To arrange professional surveys and emergency work as necessary.
- The headteacher is authorised to commit expenditure without the prior approval of the committee in any emergency where delay would result in further damage or present a risk to the health and safety of pupils or staff. In this event the headteacher would normally be expected to consult the committee chair at the earliest opportunity.
- To create a project committee where necessary to oversee any major developments.
- To establish and keep under review an Accessibility Plan and a Building Development Plan
- To review, adopt and monitor a Health and Safety policy.
- To ensure that the governing body's responsibilities regarding litter, refuse and dog excrement are discharged according to Section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, so far as is practicable.

STAFFING

- To ensure that the school/academy is staffed sufficiently for the fulfilment of the school's development plan and the effective operation of the school/academy.
- To ensure the Trust's Appraisal Policy is adhered to- including the arrangements and operation of the school's appraisal procedures for the Headteacher.
- To ensure the Trust's Pay Policy for all categories of staff is adhered to.
- To ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) follow equalities legislation.
- To ensure that the Trust procedures for dealing with staff discipline and grievances are adhered to.
- To ensure that recruitment procedures conform to Trust policies and guidance, paying particular attention to with safer recruitment practices.
- In consultation with Trust staff, to oversee any process leading to staff reductions.
- To establish the annual and longer-term salary budgets and other costs relating to personnel, e.g. training.