Marches Academy Trust

Marches Academy Trust

Governance Handbook

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Owner	Trust Governance Officer
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Related Policies/Documents	• MAT Scheme of Delegation • MAT Articles of Association • MAT Governance Code of Conduct • MAT Procedure for the removal of Trustees & Governors

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1 Introduction

Thank you for your commitment as a Governor - your unique skills, knowledge, and experience are vital to the Trust's success, and we are glad to have you on board!

The purpose of this handbook is to act as both a reference point for existing Trustees and Governors, and as an induction into effective governance for new recruits.

The Handbook contains information on the following:

- Your role within the school and on the Local Governing Body (LGB);
- Information on the Trust's structure;
- Procedures and protocols that you must be aware of;
- Signposts to further information;
- Information on the training which is available to Governors; and
- A glossary of terms and acronyms often used in meetings.

The website for your school contains a great deal of information which you may also like to refer to:

- The vision, values and ethos of your school and the Trust;
- Information about your school's curriculum;
- Contact details for members of staff;
- Up and coming events; and
- Links to the most recent Ofsted Reports.

Within this handbook, adults responsible for the care of Children and Young People (CYP) are referred throughout as responsible adults, taken to mean those with parental responsibility for the child or young person and may include parents, carers, kinship carers, corporate parents or guardians.

2 Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

"It is a great pleasure to be involved with the Marches Academy Trust as a Trustee, and having originally joined Sir John Talbot's school as a new Governor myself, I know how useful this Handbook is in understanding what's expected of Trustees and Governors and how the Trust operates.

On behalf of the Trust, I would like to express my appreciation for the commitment that you are making by taking on the role of Governor. The contribution that you will make in applying your own particular combination of skills, knowledge and experience is critical to the success of the school. You should feel confident to demonstrate your support, challenge where and when you feel it is necessary, and play your part in the school's development. You will also have the opportunity to work with other Governors across the Trust to continually improve the level of governance we provide.

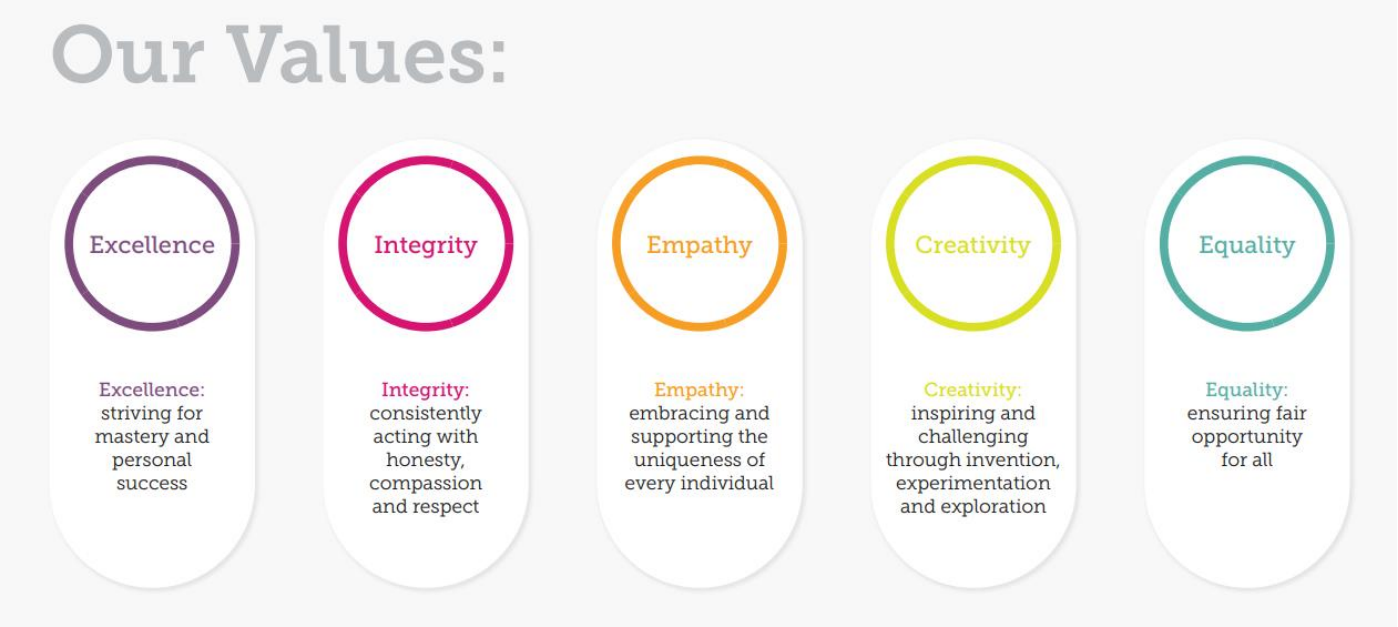
I hope you will find this Handbook of real value, and we always welcome suggestions for ways it could be improved to help new Governors joining the Trust."

Alex Fry, Chair of Board of Trustee

3 Marches Academy Trust Vision and Values

Our Vision – 'Achievement through caring'

The Marches Academy Trust (the Trust) is a vibrant learning community, comprising of a very supportive responsible adult body, caring and forward-looking staff, energetic and thoughtful students, a proactive LGB and an ever-developing cross section of community partners. CYP are placed firmly at the centre of all we do: we pride ourselves on offering a wealth of opportunities, allowing all in the learning community to experience success in many different ways, and at a variety of levels. Our challenge therefore is to constantly seek out new ways to innovate from within the classroom and outside it, as we believe firmly in the need to keep moving forward, so that our young people have the best possible experiences and life opportunities.



Marches Academy Trust Learning Mission Statement
As a Trust, it's our mission to empower everyone in our Trust and our communities to live and breathe our values and Achievement Through Caring, to reach their full potential.

4 Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB)

Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) is essential for both our workforce and our children and young people (CYP). Our vision of Achievement through Caring means we want to make sure all our staff and learners can thrive and reach their full potential. By raising awareness of the many aspects of diversity, how to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations, we are empowering our workforce and preparing our CYP to become good global citizens.

The Trust values each person equally. We are committed to building a diverse team and embedding a welcoming, inclusive culture that encourages diversity and authenticity. We believe this will encourage creative ways of thinking, ensuring we collaborate more effectively and achieve better outcomes. You can read more about the Trust's work and policies on EDIB here MAT Equality & Diversity Policies

5 Governance Structure and Lines of Accountability

The Marches Academy Trust (MAT) is governed by the Board of Trustees, who are accountable to the Department for Education, and have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of the schools operated by the Trust.

Schools currently in the Trust:

- Cockshutt CE Primary School
- Criftins CE Primary School
- Grange Primary School
- The Grove School and Sixth Form
- Idsall School
- Kinnerley CE Primary School
- Longlands Primary School
- Lower Heath CE Primary School
- The Marches School
- Oakmeadow CE Primary School
- Selattyn CE Primary School
- Shrewsbury Academy
- Sir John Talbot's School
- St. Andrew's CE Primary School
- Tilstock CE Primary School
- West Felton CE Primary School
- Weston Lullingfields CE Primary School
- Woodlands School

Good governance is at the heart of delivering educational excellence and a clearly defined structure, where all parties understand their roles and responsibilities, is essential to providing the best education for our CYP. The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee (not for profit) and is required by law to operate to all statutory regulations and rules within its Articles of Association which are registered at Companies House. The Trust has a three-tier management system. The Members of the Trust are similar to the 'shareholders' in a company and are responsible for strategic oversight, whilst the Trustees are appointed to challenge and scrutinise the strategic direction and day-to-day running of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees of the Marches Academy Trust delegates responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy to the lead professional of the MAT, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Board of Trustees Committees, including the Local Governing Bodies, also deliver elements of the Trust vision and strategy as outlined in their respective terms of reference. The Board of Trustees hold the CEO to account for the performance of the Trust, including the performance of the schools within the Trust. This means that the CEO is accountable to the Board for the performance of the Trust as a whole. The CEO will report to the Board on the performance of the Trust, including on the performance of the Trust's schools.

The CEO is performance managed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The CEO performance manages the Executive Leaders (Executive Director of Education, Chief Finance & Operating Officer, and Executive Director of ALL and Associate Executive Directors of Education). The CEO and Executive Director of Education line manage individual school Headteachers/ Head of School*. At school level there are Local Governing Bodies (LGB), who understand how the school is led and managed, act as the eyes and ears of the school and its community and have a role in influencing decision making. They have a direct communication link to the Trust Board via their Chair and the CEO, in case concerns need to be raised, and to ensure understanding and commonality of purpose.

*Headteacher/ Head of School is used to describe the person who holds the most senior position in the school.

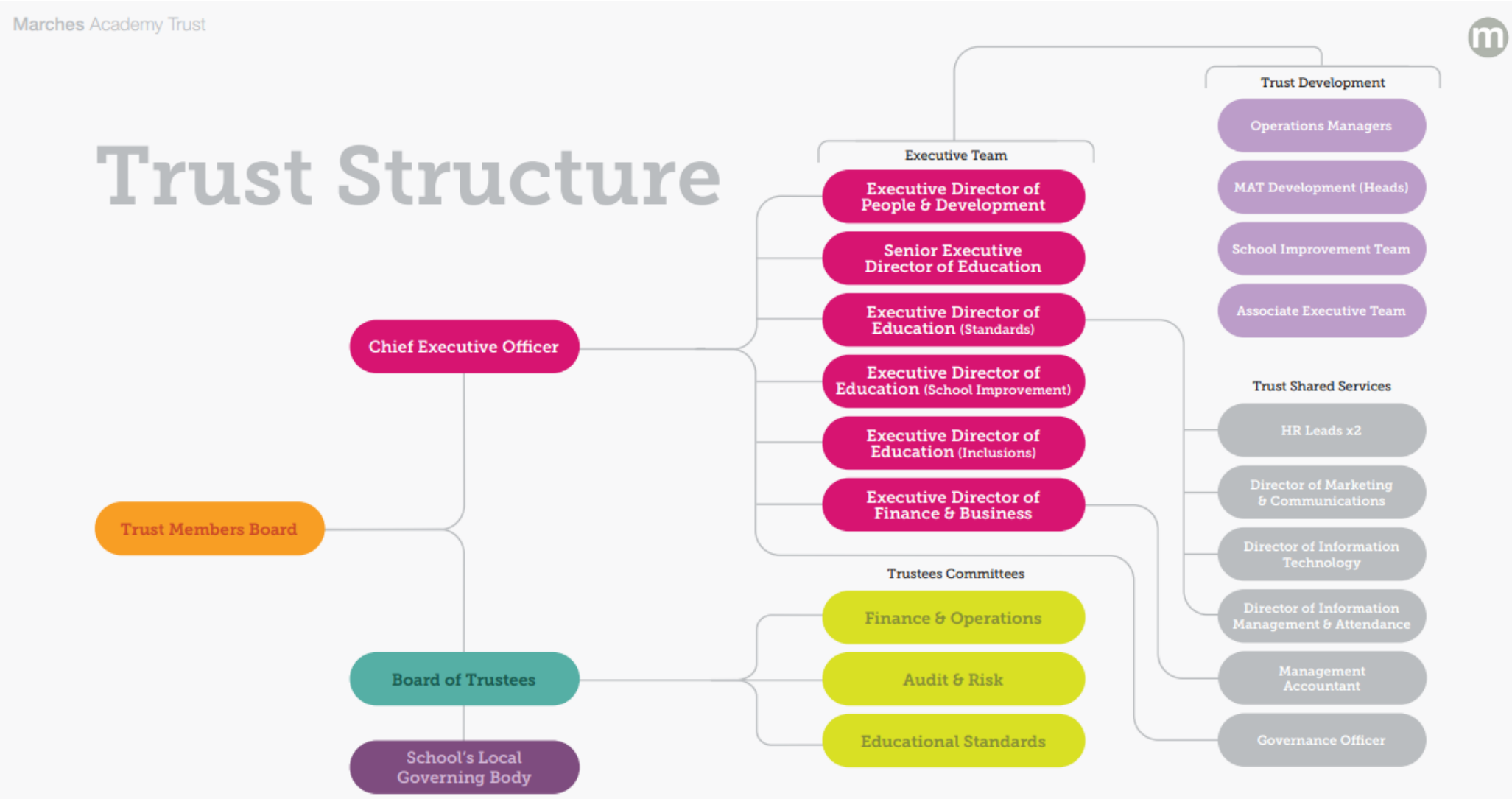
In order to assist with the discharge of their responsibilities, the Trust has established a Scheme of Delegation, Governance and Executive structures and statements of Vision and Values. The Board of Trustees have also established a Local Governing Body (LGB) for each of the schools. The LGB shall be a committee established pursuant to Articles 100 to 104 (inclusive) of the Articles of Association of the Trust.

At school level your LGB, who understands how the school is led and managed, acts as the eyes and ears of the school and its community and has a role in influencing decision making. Your Board have a direct communication link to the Trust Board via their Chair and the CEO, in case concerns need to be raised, and to ensure understanding and commonality of purpose.

Each LGB is also invited to send a representative to the Trust's Educational Standards and Finance & Operations committee meetings. These representatives will participate in the meetings but only the Trustees will have voting rights where formal decisions are required.

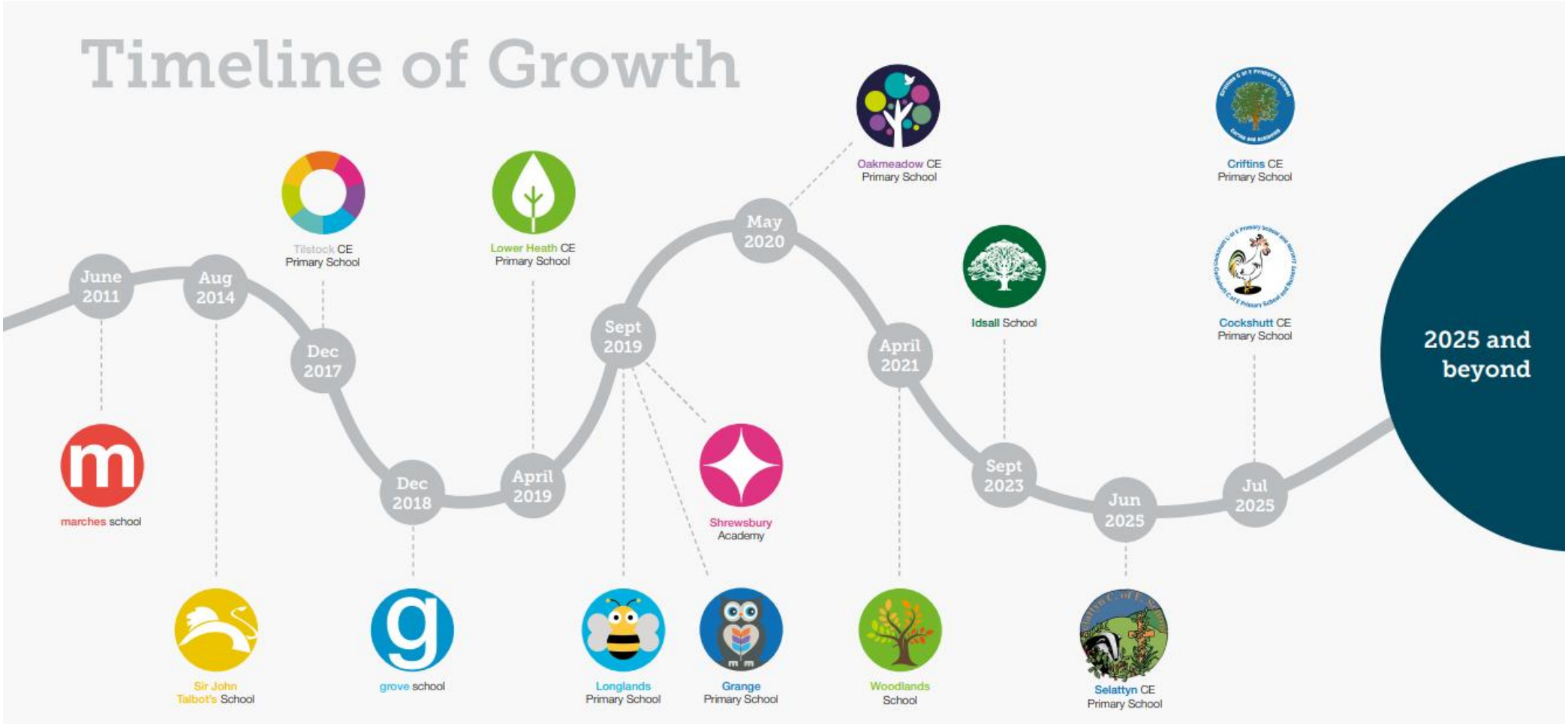
*Headteacher is used to describe the person who holds the most senior position in the school.

6 Trust structure

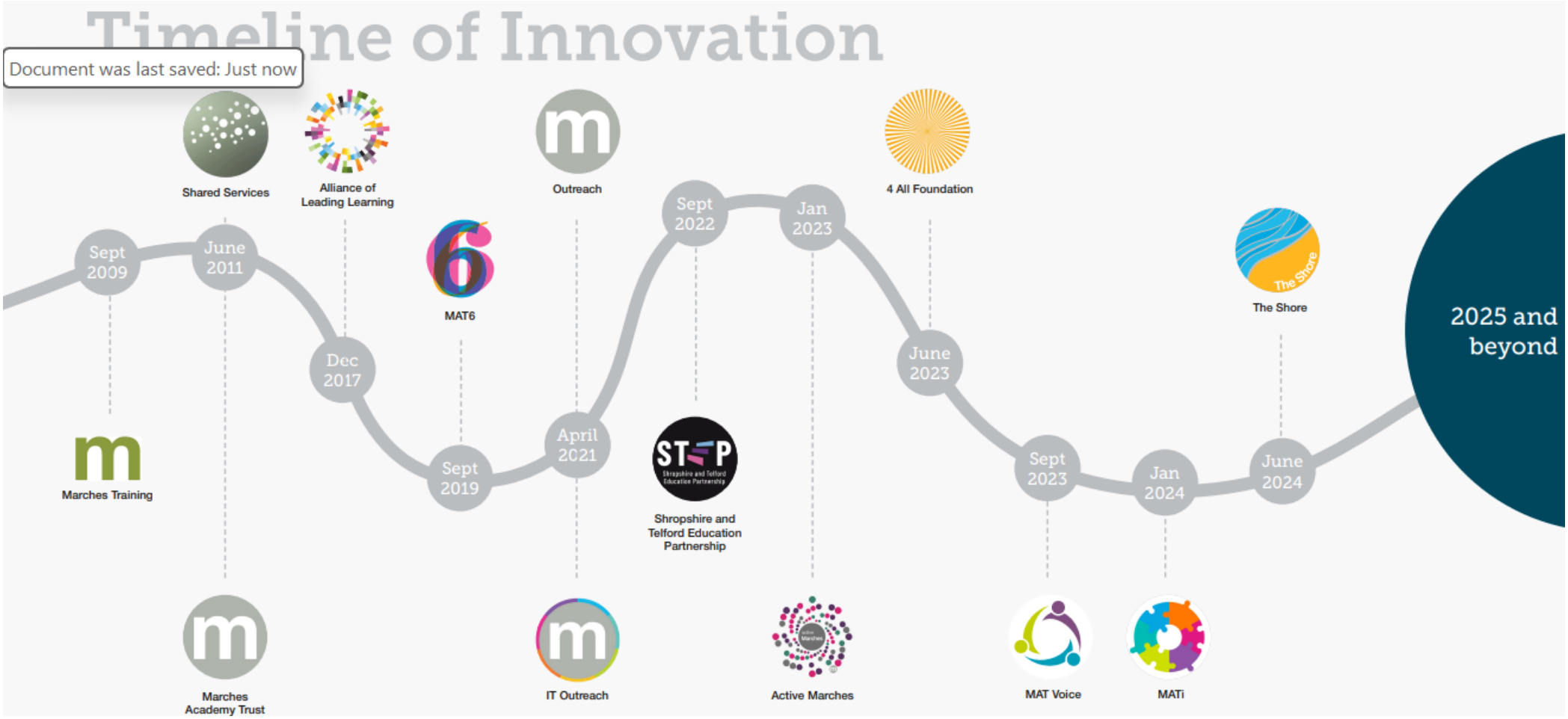


7 The Trust's Strategic Objectives

8 Timeline of growth



9 Timeline of innovation



10 The Role of Governors and the Local Governing Board

Good governance is at the heart of delivering educational excellence and a clearly defined structure, where all parties understand their roles and responsibilities, is essential to providing the best education for our CYP. The purpose of governance is to provide confident and strong strategic leadership which leads to robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Trust encourages open governance, and LGBs should be practising this at all times.

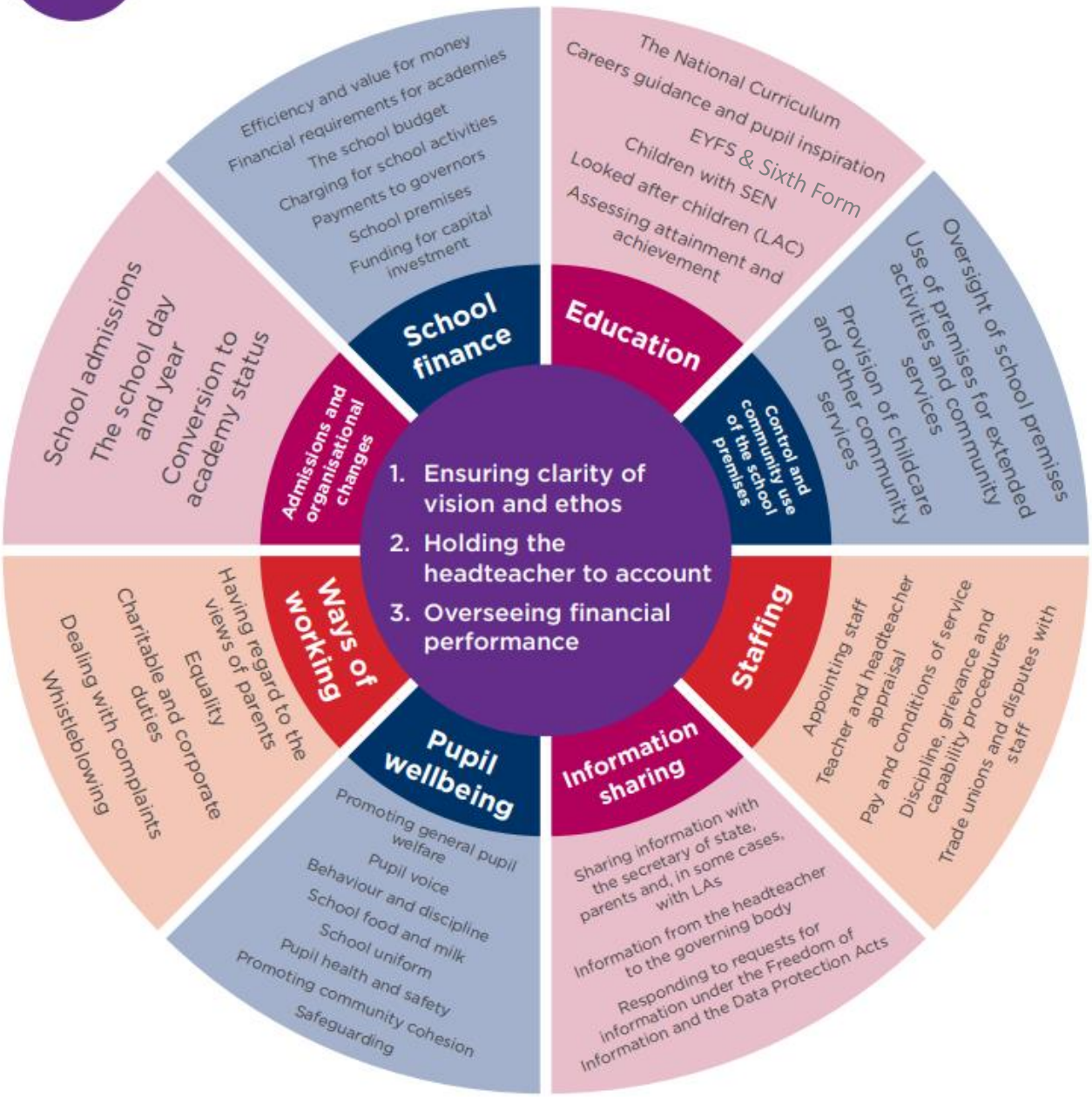
The Board of Trustees has established an LGB in each school. The Trustees appoint the Chair and approve Community Governors. A minimum of two responsible adults will also be elected to the body.

Summary of Core Function/Responsibilities:

1. Ensuring and championing clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its CYP, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff;
3. Ensuring value for money is being achieved from school budgets. (This does not include formal financial accountability which is delegated to the CFOO);
4. Assist in overseeing the Health and Safety of all students, staff and visitors; and ensuring safeguarding for all students; and
5. ensuring the voices of school stakeholders are heard.

The LGB will also evaluate, monitor and seek to improve the quality and impact of governance.

Wheel of governance

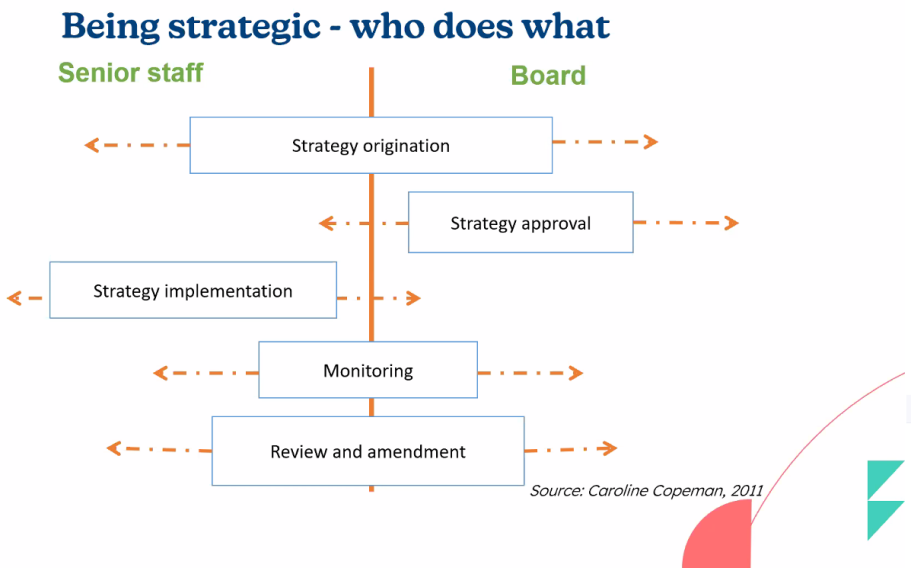


11 Strategic v Operational

Strategic: “relating to the identification of long-term or overall aims and interests and the means of achieving them”

Operational: “relating to the routine functioning and activities of an organisation”

It is important that Members, Trustees and Governors take a strategic approach and do not become too “hands on”.

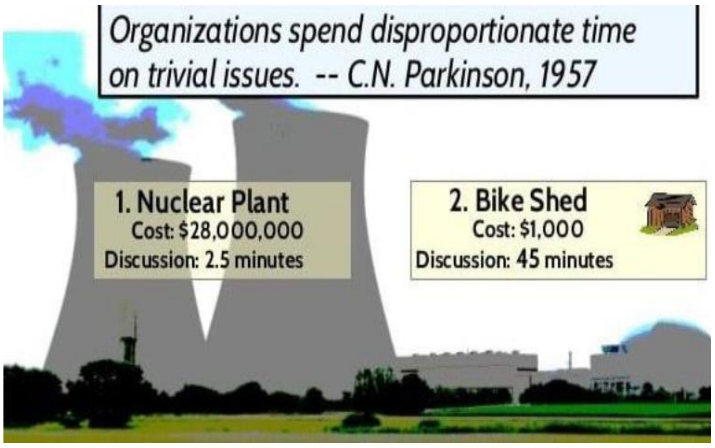


Source: NGA 2024

Strategic vs Operational examples

Strategic	Operational
Make sure the school is keeping up with its statutory duties of completing the Single Central Record by asking questions such as how it is updated and reviewed.	Senior leaders carry out the task of physically checking the SCR, making sure it is complete and up to date.
Hold the school accountable for how it spends its pupil premium funding by asking questions.	The SLT decides what to spend pupil premium funding on.
Review attendance data regularly at board meetings to identify trends and challenge the leadership team on interventions.	Day-to-day management and immediate actions, arrange meetings with families for persistent absence. Record reasons for absence in MIS (Management Information System)

12 Bikeshedding



Consider the concept of 'Bikeshedding'. The 'bike shed effect' or Parkinson's law of triviality, describes a tendency to devote disproportionate time to minor issues. This occurs because simpler topics are generally more approachable than complex ones, encouraging greater participation.

As it is challenging to be fully strategic about less significant matters, focus on trivial tasks can result in an increased emphasis on operational activities.

("Mohan pd", The Coders Blog, 2019)

13 Eight key elements to governing effectively

Source: NGA

1. The right people around the table

Every LGB needs a blend of knowledge, skills, perspectives and backgrounds to govern effectively. Governors and Trustees complete an NGA skills audit to identify where they need to develop knowledge, skills and behaviour to deliver their functions effectively.

2. Understanding the role and responsibilities

Governors and Trustees help to ensure the wellbeing of the children and young people in our schools and enable them to achieve to the best of their ability. See Summary of function/responsibilities above.

3. Good chairing

The chair leads the governing board with support from the vice chair, ensuring it fulfils its strategic functions. A chair should encourage the board to work together as an effective team, building their skills, knowledge and experience.

Although the chair has no individual power, they should have significant influence on the LGB's culture and conduct.

4. Professional clerking

Every LGB needs a professional clerk responsible for advising their LGB on constitutional matters, duties and powers, and will ensure that their LGB is operated in a way that conforms to the Trust's Articles of Association and the Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk will, under the guidance of the Trust's Governance Officer, secure the continuity of all governance business within the LGB. The clerk's role includes providing advice - the clerk is there to assist and is one of the most important people the LGB works with.

5. Good relationships based on trust

Effective Governors and Trustees are good team members. This means being willing to share the workload, being respectful of different personalities and perspectives (even when you disagree), and celebrating success together.

6. Knowing the school

Understanding the school's strengths and weaknesses informs the board's strategic discussions and decisions about current priorities and the future. Monitoring Governor and Trustees visits provide the governing board with essential information about how its strategy is being implemented and how issues discussed at LGB translate into everyday school life. Visits also allow Governors and Trustees to make themselves visible to the school community and to experience the culture and ethos of the school/trust. Visits are also important because they enable Governors and Trustees to triangulate information by seeing with their own eyes what senior leaders are saying and professional external experts are reporting.

7. Committed to asking challenging questions

Governors and Trustees should be prepared to ask questions when carrying out their role. Asking challenging questions helps to gain clarity and test assumptions. It is essential to setting strategic goals, monitoring progress and meeting wider governing board responsibilities.

8. Confident to have courageous conversations in the interests of children and young people

Governing boards are expected to discuss and challenge the information they are provided with. Governors and Trustees should expect to receive clear responses from school/trust leaders. Having the courage to ask a challenging question may reveal other board members who are in the same situation as you and an alternative angle that has not been considered.

The way in which we ask a question has an impact on the way that it is perceived and answered. Keep in mind that accountability is about analysing how things are working and what should be done collaboratively, rather than apportioning any blame

Effective governance is never passive, and the Trust expects its Trustees and Governors to:

- Engage with the Trust and attend LGB meetings;
- Stay strategic and avoid unnecessary detail and peripheral issues;
- Ask questions & challenge;
- Understand safeguarding;
- Set and safeguard high expectations of and for the LGB, CYP, staff and responsible adults;
- Get to know other people on your LGB board & across the Trust; and
- Be informed - keep yourself up to date and undertake CPD & training.

14 The Relationship between the Academy Trust, the Local Governing Body & the Committees

The LGB has delegated power to act on behalf of the Trustees to monitor the school and review:

- the management and organisation of the school;
- the implementation of the decisions of the Board and the CEO;
- performance in relation to targets and standards approved by the Board; and
- the implementation of policies approved by the Board.

The LGB will report to the Board of Trustees on decisions and will also provide advice and make recommendations to the Board on issues.

It may be necessary, from time to time, to establish a committee of the LGB, in order to deal with an issue that cannot be dealt with adequately by the LGB in one of its scheduled meetings e.g. a committee to deal with admissions, salaries, complaints or a CYP Exclusion.

It may also be necessary, to establish a working party to progress a project e.g. stakeholder engagement during a major school rebuild. Any such working party must be agreed and approved at a full LGB meeting. The working party will be disbanded as soon as its work is complete and must always report back to the LGB/Board of Trustees as it does not have delegated powers.

The Board of Trustees may, if required, disband the LGB at any time and take over its function for governance.

The Board of Trustees can amend the levels of delegation of the LGB, if required, at any time.

Attendance at Trustee committee meetings

The Trust encourages LGB representation at Trustee committee meetings to enhance and strengthen communication between the tiers of governance and ensure transparency in governance of the Trust. It also seeks to provide confidence that the Board of Trustees is operating effectively.

LGB representatives can attend the following committee meetings:

- Audit & Risk
- Educational Standards
- Finance & Operations

LGB representatives cannot attend Board of Trustees meetings, or the joint Audit & Risk and Finance & Operations meeting held in December meeting with auditors to approve the accounts.

LGB representatives can be any Governor from a school LGB, it does not need to be the Chair or Vice Chair. Please note it is not mandatory to send LGB representatives to Trustee committee meetings.

Please note that there should only be one representative per LGB, attending as observers they are unable to contribute to Trustee decision making but can raise questions under any other business.

LGB representatives should inform the Trust Governance Officer in advance if they wish to attend a meeting. Papers for part one of the agenda will be sent to them.

Protocol at meetings

- Some agenda items e.g. school specific budgets or HR KPIs are strictly confidential.
- The Executive team will determine which items should be discussed under part two of the agenda.
- LGB representatives will be sent papers and minutes for part one and will leave before part two of the agenda.
- LGB representatives are welcome to contribute to discussions of an agenda item if they raise their hand or are invited to do so at the end of the meeting by the committee Chair.
- LGB representatives should refrain from asking any school-specific questions that are not relevant to the agenda item. These questions should be raised outside of committee meetings.
- LGB representatives should provide feedback from Trustee committee meetings to their fellow Governors at their next LGB meeting.

15 The Constitution of the Local Governing Body

The constitution of the LGB will be defined by the Board of Trustees, and will be reviewed annually.

The model composition of a LGB:

Type of Member	Number	Term of office	Election method
School Headteacher/Head of School	1	Indefinite	Ex officio appointment
Parent Governors	2	4 year	Parent election – Secret ballot organised by the Clerk.
Staff Governor	1	4 year	Staff election – Secret ballot organised by the Clerk.
Community Governor & Foundation Trustee Governor	Max of 5*	4 year	Community Governors are appointed by the Board of Trustees. In church schools, the Diocese appoints its own Governors. *Foundation Trustee Governors in church schools must be at a ratio of 25% of the LGB's total members. Community Governors will make up the rest of LGB.

LGB's may have an Associate Member to contribute specifically to issues related to the person's expertise e.g. HR or finance. They can attend full board meetings but do not have voting rights and may be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil. They are appointed for a period of between one and four years and can be reappointed at the end of their term of office.

Associate Members are not Governors. They are not able to attend a pupil disciplinary committee, complaints committee or staff pay progression meeting. The person does not need to be recorded on the school's official governance record on Get Information About Schools (GIAS).

Membership of the LGB will be determined by the Board of Trustees, and the filling of vacancies is to be approved by the Trustees.

The Trustees have an approved election process, and any vacancies will be filled through requests for nominations, and elections where there is more than one nomination.

The Board of Trustees, through the Trust Governance Officer (TGO), must be notified of all Governor appointments and removals. The process of approval is within Section 16.

The term of office for members of the LGB will be four years. A Governor will be removed from office if they are absent, without the permission of the LGB/Board of Trustees, from meetings held within a period of 6 months, unless there are deemed to be extenuating circumstances.

Each Governor shall act in the best interests of the school and advocating the Trust values and vision at all times. Trustees may terminate or suspend the appointment of any Governor whose presence or conduct is deemed by the Trustees not to be in the best interest of the Trust or the school. Governors will be required to read and sign the Code of Conduct every year. They must operate within this Code of Conduct, abide by equality legislation in the Equalities Act 2010 and adhere to the Nolan principles of public life.

Part of the role of any Governor within the Trust will be to make visits into school; these should be carried out following the Trust's Governor Visits Protocol which is outlined later in this document.

16 Appointment and Removal of Governors to the Local Governing Body

The Trust encourages Governors from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and perspectives, that better reflect the communities they serve.

Position	Appointed By
Chair of LGB	Board of Trustees
Headteacher	Board of Trustees
Community Governor	Applications are reviewed at the LGB meeting and then forwarded to TGO with a recommendation for approval. Final approval is determined by the Board of Trustees, and the term start date is the date the Board of Trustees grants approval.
Foundation Governor	Recommended and appointed by the Diocese. Applications are reviewed at the LGB meeting and then forwarded to TGO with a recommendation for approval. Final approval is determined by the Board of Trustees, and the term start date is the date the Board of Trustees grants approval.
Staff Governor	Voted by staff during an election. Start date is the end of election period. TGO and Board of Trustees are informed. No formal approval required from the Board of Trustees.
Parent Governor	Voted by school community during an election. TGO and Board of Trustees are informed. No formal approval required from the Board of Trustees.

Governors are appointed for a period of 4 years. The LGB can interview new Governor applicants and recommend the approval of new Governors to Trustees, however, in line with the Trust's Articles of Association final approval is granted by the Board of Trustees, including Associate Members.

Governors may be removed by resignation, or by Trustees, if their presence or conduct is deemed by the Board of Trustees, at their sole discretion, not to be in the best interest of the Trust or the individual school. The Trust has a separate policy "Procedure for the removal of Trustees & Governors" which sets out the framework and procedure for disqualifying, suspending or removing Governors/Trustees.

The Board of Trustees may choose to bring in people to sit on LGBs who provide links to the local community, in addition to responsible adults.

17 Chair & Vice Chair elections

An election for the Chair and Vice Chair role will be held by the LGB in the autumn term of every year. Chairs and Vice Chairs can nominate themselves through their Clerk.

The election must be a formal agenda item and all those members of the LGB present at the first meeting of the LGB will vote. The outcome of this vote will be communicated to the Trust's Governance Officer who will take the LGB's recommendation to Trustees for their final approval in line with Article 101 of the Trust's Articles of Association.

The incumbent Chair will remain as Chair until the Board of Trustees ratifies the nomination at first Board of Trustees meeting which takes place at the end of September. During this meeting Trustees will formally vote to approve all the recommendations for LGB Chairs across the Trust. The Trust's Governance Officer will inform LGB Clerks of the approval after this meeting.

Chair & Vice Chair Elections

LGBs are democratic bodies that should promote a vibrant democracy that encourages active, democratic Governor participation. Election processes should be formal and transparent and ensure that the democratic rights of Governors are exercised.

The Trust seeks to ensure our LGB's elections are conducted in a positive spirit in the interest of both schools and Governors alike. Information and required forms for election of Chair and Vice Chair can be found HERE

Process for election

1. Clerks must email the LGB asking for nominations, including self-nominations, and set a deadline before the LGB meeting. This ensures that every Governor is fully aware of the impending election and has an equal chance to consider standing.

2. Those standing should be given the opportunity to submit a statement in support of their candidacy. The candidates' details can be included with the agenda for the meeting.

3. The election must be added to the LGB agenda in Autumn 1 as a separate agenda item and sent a full 7 days in advance of the meeting.

4. The Clerk ensures the meeting is quorate and there are enough Governors present at the meeting to conduct official business.

5. The Clerk takes the Chair role and will read out the candidates' names she has received and ask for any further nominations.

6. Candidates are then allowed to put forward their case for being elected (with a time limit).

7. Candidates will leave the room, and the remaining Governors will discuss the candidates' suitability once they have left.

8. Governors are given time to discuss the candidates' suitability once candidates have left the meeting.

9. Clerk hands out ballot papers and conducts a secret ballot then counts the ballots and announces the result of the election.

10. The successful chair candidate will be noted in the minutes. The Clerk will notify the Trust's Governance Officer that the LGB recommend this appointment to the Board of Trustees. This will be approved at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

11. If there is a tie, the Clerk does not have a casting vote. A second ballot could be held between any tied candidates. If their original statement was supplied as a written submission the tied candidates could be given an opportunity to speak to the LGB at this point. If a second ballot fails to resolve the issue, the tied candidates would have to draw lots.

12. If a candidate is not elected (or there are no nominations) then a Governor elected for the purpose of the one meeting will chair the rest of the meeting and the election will appear again on the next full LGB agenda.

13. The Clerk will conduct the election for the Vice Chair, which could also be carried out by secret ballot, but in the event of a tie the incumbent chair would have a casting vote.

Governors running as a candidate in the election cannot vote for themselves.

Please note that an election may also be required if the LGB chair (or vice-chair) resigns or is removed from office.

Co-chairs

The LGB will first need to agree that they are happy to adopt a co-chair model and be satisfied that it would not lead to any lack of clarity in leadership. Any proposed model must be formally approved by the Board of Trustees in line with the Trust's Articles of Association.

In a co-Chair model two individuals put forward one nomination, so the Governors would cast one vote to elect both individuals, rather than choosing between the two.

It is possible to have a 'solo' chair nomination and a co-Chair nomination in the same election. The LGB does not need to opt for only a co-Chair model or only a solo Chair model.

The two candidates wishing to stand as co-Chairs put forward one joint nomination, so the LGB is voting for person A and person B as one entity.

If an LGB has co-Chairs it will still require a Vice Chair.

Rules on canvassing

Canvassing means the systematic initiation of direct contact with members the LGB with a view to soliciting their vote in an election.

The Trust does not permit candidates to canvas for votes and any breach would invalidate a candidate's nomination.

Candidates should not request any other Governor to solicit or canvass votes on their behalf.

If a candidate is unsure about what is considered canvassing, they must seek the view of the Clerk.

18 The Meetings

18.1 **Meeting Protocol**

Meetings of the LGB should be purposeful, effective, and make efficient use of the time that volunteer Governors generously give to support the school.

LGB meetings cannot take place without the Headteacher and the Clerk present to ensure a fully informed meeting. If the Headteacher is on long term leave, the person delegated with Headship responsibilities or an Executive Lead must be present. An agenda must always be issued, and the meeting must be minuted by the Clerk. No subcommittees of Governors can meet without the approval of the whole LGB including the Headteacher.

Confidential matters regarding the Headteacher or school MUST be discussed with a member of the Executive team first.

The LGB should meet at least once every half term and **should last no more than about 2 hours.** Where a meeting seems likely to overrun the agenda will be prioritised to ensure that the most urgent items are dealt with.

Along with the standard items for each meeting there should be:

- updates on CYP achievement, including attendance and exclusions;
- regular reports in areas such as Special Educational Needs and Disability, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Pupil Premium (these are always a focus for Ofsted);
- report from the Chair on any actions taken in the interim period;
- the Headteacher's reports informing Governors of educational performance and leadership updates form the core part of the agenda. They should embrace the key issues that Governors will need to assess the progress of the school. There is a small section on Governance which should take no longer than 10 – 15 minutes to receive news of Governor visits, training and any policy feedback.
- Any Other Business (AOB) - except in extreme circumstances, AOB items should be submitted to the Chair in good time before the meeting to allow the issue to be itemised for Governors to consider before the meeting: it is at the Chair's discretion whether AOB items are accepted.
- The agenda and supporting papers should be prepared and circulated in advance to give time for Governors to read them before the meeting. It is good practice for Governors to receive the papers at least seven days prior to the meeting (five working days). Papers must not be tabled at the LGB meeting except in extreme circumstances. **There is an expectation that the papers will be read by all Governors beforehand in order to conduct the meeting effectively.**
- On the assumption that pre-reading has taken place, the Chair should take questions and points of clarification on each of the papers presented but the papers should not be re-read line by line in the meeting. Please note:

- The meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and with any other regulations, amendments, or directions as may be issued from time to time.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the LGB will be elected by all those members of the LGB present at the first meeting of the LGB in the Autumn Term every year. Chairs and Vice Chairs can nominate themselves through their Clerk. The Clerk shall act as chairman during that part of any meeting at which the chairman is elected. Any election of the chairman or vice-chairman which is contested shall be held by secret ballot.
- The meetings of the LGB will be quorate if three or one-third of the membership are present (whichever is greater).
- The Clerking to all the committees will be fulfilled by the Clerk to the LGB.
- Governors will be required to declare any personal or financial conflict of interest arising from a matter before the Governors or from any other aspect of governorship and should not use their position as governor to benefit him/herself or other individuals or agencies. Please read the Trust's Conflict of Interest Policy for further information.
- Minutes shall be kept of each meeting, and shall be presented at the next meeting of the LGB, for approval and signing by the Chair. The minutes shall be kept in a separate minutes folder, with confidential minutes and reports on yellow paper. A copy of the impact statements shall be submitted to meetings of the Board of Trustees, to include any challenge and recommendations made by the LGB and the minutes will also be made available.
- Governors have the right to request any matters discussed at meetings to be recorded in the minutes, subject to confidentiality.
- Governors should be aware of the procedures established by the LGB for responding to criticism or complaint relating to the school. Please see the Trust's complaints policy.
- Each LGB is authorised to invite attendance at its meetings from persons to assist or advise on a particular matter, or range of issues, including responsible adults and members of the school staff who are not Governors.
- Only Governors may vote at the LGB meetings. Where necessary, the elected Chair of the Committee may have a second or casting vote. Governors may not vote by proxy. Any Governor may participate in a meeting by telephone or video conference, provided that they have given reasonable notice to the Clerk, and that the Governors have access to the appropriate equipment.
- In the event of a need to make genuinely urgent decisions between meetings, on matters falling within the remit of the committee, the Chair of the LGB, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, will take appropriate action on behalf of the LGB. The decisions taken and the reasons for urgency will be explained fully at the next LGB meeting.

18.2 Notice of Meetings

The LGB shall generally meet in accordance with the annual meeting schedule agreed at the start of each year; additional emergency meetings may be called as and when necessary, at the request of the Chair, or at the request, in writing, by any three Governors.

Meetings of the Committees will be called by the Clerk, and seven days' notice will be given with an explanation of the purpose of the meeting and a clear agenda.

19 Confidentiality

People in the school and Trust community have rights to privacy under data protection law, and these rights must be upheld. Confidentiality is part of the Code of Conduct and Governors must observe complete confidentiality in all matters discussed at LGB meetings especially in relation to matters concerning CYP or staff and any other matters agreed by the LGB.

Governors should never speak out against decisions, in public or in private, outside the LGB. Failure to comply can lead to disciplinary action. Please see item 13 Code of Conduct below.

Confidential matters regarding the Headteacher or school MUST be discussed with a member of the Executive team first.

The LGB as a whole decides if an item for discussion is confidential, and all Governors are expected to abide by that decision. Governors are expected to respect that confidentiality and not disclose information deemed as confidential in any other forum. All discussion in reaching decisions should remain confidential to those present at the meeting.

Details of how individuals contribute to meetings and how Trustees and Governors vote should also be kept confidential. This information should also be anonymised in meeting minutes.

The Committee may need to meet in confidential mode, where the subject for consideration is the pay or performance review of any person employed to work at the school. In such cases any relevant person employed to work at the school, other than the Headteacher, should withdraw, unless specifically invited to stay by the Committee to contribute to the consideration of the matter.

All reports to the LGB and its committees are public documents after the meeting has considered them and must be available at the school to anyone wishing to view them unless the LGB specifically decides they are confidential. Please also note that whilst your LGB can decide to have a confidential section in your agenda and minutes, these can be requested under a Freedom of Information (FOI) request and confidential minutes would have to be made available. Even redacted information from minutes can be requested under an FOI and if challenged by the requester the ICO would force your school to make even the redacted information available.

You are asked to leave any hard copies of confidential reports or minutes with the Clerk at the end of a meeting so that they can be securely destroyed.

For GDPR purposes school & Trust data should not be shared with external non-Trust email addresses so that the Trust remains compliant with data protection law. Even if information is shared with a limited audience or with good intentions, breaches of confidentiality and/or data protection law could have significant consequences.

GDPR, Freedom of Information and Information Security
It is the responsibility of the Governors to ensure procedures are in place to ensure that the school complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and the Data Protection Act

2018 which is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Trust has both a Data Protection Policy, which is publicly displayed on the school's websites.

If you want to know more about the Data Protection Act please click HERE

Freedom of Information Act 2000
The Freedom of Information Act was passed to open up public bodies to greater scrutiny by the public. It has two key requirements:

- To require public organisations, such as schools, to have a publication scheme where they proactively publish details of budgets, policies and other key items of information – such as minutes of the LGB.
- To give members of the public the right to request copies of any information or document held by the school.

One key issue you need to be aware of is 'Confidential minutes' – these are not always confidential. Although such minutes are confidential at the moment of creation, such confidentiality can diminish over time. Although personal information would normally remain confidential (unless subject to a SAR request) until a person's death, detailed information about contract terms and decisions would become available to the public on completion of the contract.

For more information about the Freedom of Information Act please click HERE

Information Security
Some of the work you do as a Governor may involve holding personal and confidential information. You must treat the security of this information as a top priority.

Passwords
The risk of cyber threats towards schools is increasing daily so as part of the measures to help keep us safe we will be implementing a password policy across the Trust. This will require users to create a more secure password that meets these complexity requirements:

Passwords should contain a combination of the following:

- Uppercase letters A-Z)
- Lowercase letters a-z)
- Numbers 0-9)
- Non-alphanumeric characters (special characters): (~!@#$%^&*_-+=`|\(){}[]:;"'<>,.?/) Currency symbols such as the Euro or British Pound are not counted as special characters for this policy setting
- Must be at least 6 characters long

All papers from meetings should be either handed back at the end of the meeting, or returned to school for confidential shredding.

At home

- **You must use your official mmat.co.uk email address to send and receive any emails. Please do not use your personal email address.**

- Keep any files associated with your duties secure and save documents to the Trust's LGB SharePoint site. Any data folder stored on a personal laptop or hard drive should be password protected or password protect each file individually. Ideally hard drives should be encrypted.
- Do not keep a back-up of all your work on a memory stick.
- Securely delete all files.
- Do not leave paper files or meeting notes containing personal or confidential information on lying around, they should be locked away when not in use.

When moving information between locations

- Keep paper records/files and your laptop secure at all times, they are your responsibility.
- If leaving paper records or your laptop in a car, they need to be hidden away, preferably kept in a locked boot.
- All USB storage devices have now been blocked across the network. This measure is to protect our systems and data from potential threats. If you require access for a legitimate purpose, please raise a request through the IT Support Desk for review.
- Only forward emails containing personal information on a 'need to know' basis: take special care to check the contents of long email responses.

20 Governors Conduct

The Governors Code of Conduct lays out the full expectations of Members, Trustees and Governors. All Members, Trustees and Governors within the Trust must sign the Code of Conduct every year and must adhere to it at all times.

The LGB is a corporate entity and acts as a group. No one category of Governor has legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore Governors will only speak on behalf of the Local Governing Body when they have been specifically authorised to do so (or when the Chair [or Vice-Chair] has to take urgent action).

In line with the Trust's Code of Conduct form that Governors sign, Governors accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that Governors will not speak against majority decisions outside the Members, Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body meetings. The strength of a LGB lies in the talents and commitment of its members, and in their ability to work together as a team as a collective body for the good of the school. Every Governor has an equal right to participate and to state their own views. No Governor has the right to expect preferential treatment because of his or her status on this or any other body or group.

Each Governor has a responsibility to make up their own mind about issues that are considered by the LGB. Once decisions are made by the LGB (or under the delegated authority of the LGB), individual Governors are bound by them and are expected to support and abide by them.

Governors should encourage open governance and act appropriately. They have a responsibility to act fairly and without prejudice at all times, and in so far as they have responsibilities for staff, will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer. Concerns about the school or individual members of staff will be dealt with through the Headteacher and not aired publicly. Governors also have a duty to abide by equality legislation in the Equalities Act 2010 and support the school/Trust in the promotion of fundamental British values.

Governors should always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school/group of schools. Your actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.

Governors must follow the Trust's complaints procedures in making or responding to any criticism or complaints. Further advice and guidance is available from the Trust's Governance Officer.

Governors are expected to:

- Read any papers circulated before the meeting.
- Attend meetings and arrive on time.
- Send apologies to the Clerk before the meeting if you cannot attend.
- Contribute to the discussions where relevant.
- Avoid anecdotal distractions.
- After debate, accept the majority view of the LGB.
- Respect the confidentiality of issues raised.

- Adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times.

The Trust sets high standards for the role, conduct and professionalism of its Governors and Trustees who all have an obligation to act in the best interests of the Trust. The role of a Governor and Trustee is crucial in the effective governance of our schools and our Trust. There are times when a Governor/Trustee may need to be disqualified, suspended or removed and the Trust has a separate policy "Procedure for the removal of Trustees & Governors" which sets out the framework and procedure for doing so.

21 Local Governing Body Terms of Reference

Our Governors should seek to understand and question how the school is led and managed, acting as a critical friend. Key responsibilities are:

Standards

1. Ensure that the Trust's vision, ethos and strategy is adopted and applied by school leaders.
2. Work with senior leaders to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to address them in line with the Trust's strategic objectives.
3. Monitor school performance and improvement through regular reviews of the School Development Plan and performance data, including exam results, attendance rates, and pupil progress.
4. Monitor and challenge educational standards, reporting on concerns from the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the Trustees of the Educational Standards Committee.
5. Ensure that the Trust's curriculum is being provided to pupils in an appropriate manner for the school's context.
6. Assist the Trust in monitoring, challenging and reporting on concerns relating to the Health and Safety of all children and young people, staff, and visitors; and ensuring safeguarding for all children and young people.
7. Act as the panel when reviewing the school Headteacher/Head of School's decisions on exclusions, and other committees as required e.g. salaries, complaints and pupil and staff disciplinary/dismissal committees.
8. Ensure that the required policies and procedures are in place and that the school is operating effectively in line with these policies.
9. Establish a strong relationship with the Headteacher in order to provide effective support and challenge, including providing feedback to their performance management process.

Stakeholder engagement

10. Consult stakeholders – responsible adults, staff and pupils – and use insights to inform decision-making.
11. Help stakeholders to understand the trust's values and vision for the future.
12. Provide the trust board with insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by the school's local community.
13. Forge links with the community and provide a vehicle for Trust board engagement with the school, its responsible adults and local community, to help ensure that the Board of Trustees stay connected.
14. Act as an ambassador for the school.

Safeguarding

15. Foster a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff in the school.
16. Ensure that the adopted safeguarding policies and procedures reflect the safeguarding challenges and context of the school.
17. Monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and the effectiveness of procedures.
18. Designate a link governor to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding.
19. Monitor the school's estate, ensuring that appropriate policies are adopted and followed in order to keep pupils and staff safe.

SEND

20. Ensure that the Trust's policy for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is implemented and adapted to the specific school context where necessary.
21. Seek assurance that staff are trained to implement pupil strategies and support plans.
22. Ensure pupils with SEND have the resources they need to succeed.
23. Designate a link governor to take leadership responsibility for SEND.
24. Work in partnership with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and other stakeholders across the MAT community to ensure that pupils with SEND are well-supported and included in all aspects of school life.
25. Monitor the overall effectiveness of the school's SEND provision, referring to pupil outcomes and other relevant data.

Other

26. For church schools, to monitor and support the Christian Distinctiveness and theologically rooted vision of the school.
27. Bring any issues and risks to the attention of the Board of Trustees.
28. Provide constructive feedback to the Board of Trustees where a policy may not be effective in the local context, and suggest alternative approaches.
29. Help ensure the Trust works as one entity, in the interests of all its schools equally.
30. Deal with any other matters which the Board of Trustees may refer from time to time.
31. Report to the Board of Trustees annually on members contribution and the impact of the LGB.
32. Ensure value for money is being achieved from school budgets. (This does not include formal financial accountability which is delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and Business).
33. Provide a consultative forum for the school for the implementation of new policies and procedures.
34. Assist in the effective and efficient performance management of teaching staff, making recommendations to the Board of Trustees on pay progression.
35. Monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of governance.

Please also refer to matrix in the Scheme of Delegation which clearly sets out responsibilities of each layer of governance and determines who has the power to take which decision within the Trust.

22 The Different Roles on the Governing Body

The Relationship between Governors and the Headteacher

Support and Challenge
The Governors' role is to both challenge and support the leadership of the school, to ensure that the agreed vision for the school is delivered. Governors need to be aware of the progress the school is making through regular reviews and discussion. This needs to be supported by regular, rigorous data. It also needs to be set into the context of each cohort, and of cohorts over time. Governors need to be aware of the challenges which the leadership is facing, and of the measures being taken to meet these challenges.

Support
The Governors need to publicly support the actions agreed at LGB meetings, even when these will prove difficult and unpopular. The Chair of Governors and the LGB have a role to play in staffing decisions that may result in reorganisation and redundancy. They have a role in the performance management of the Headteacher but also in supporting the leadership of the school in delivering effective performance management for all members of staff. The Headteacher needs the support of the LGB to ensure high quality teaching and learning throughout the school, and must be able to rely on this when the going gets tough.

Challenge
The Ofsted framework has firmly linked effective governance with effective leadership of the school. Both need to be good to achieve a good grade from an Ofsted inspection (please see section 24).

Positions within the LGB
The Chair will be appointed by the Trust annually, and the Vice Chair is appointed by the members of the LGB. The Clerk shall act as chairman during that part of any meeting at which the chairman is elected. Any election of the chairman or vice-chairman which is contested shall be held by secret ballot.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will lead the meetings of the LGB and take 'Chair's action' if necessary. At a meeting where neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair is present, the LGB will elect a Chair from those Governors present for the duration of that meeting (it cannot be the Headteacher).

The Board of Trustees may remove the chairman or vice-chairman from office in accordance with the Trust's Articles or Association.

Role of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors
The Chair of the LGB is responsible for the efficient running of Governors' meetings. The Chair will liaise with the Clerk to the LGB, to ensure that agendas and associated papers are prepared in good time, and circulated before the meeting. This should, as a minimum, be 7 full days (5 working days). It will be the expectation that Governors will have read the papers before the meeting, to contribute to the effective and efficient governance of the school.

Ideally, no meeting of the LGB should exceed two hours, and it is the Chair's role to ensure proper discussion and participation within this timescale.

The Vice Chair of the LGB will substitute for the Chair in his/her absence and should follow the guidance set out above. Where the absence of the Chair is known in good time, it would be good practice for the Chair and Vice Chair to liaise in some detail to ensure that the Vice Chair is properly prepared for the meeting.

The Chair will be expected to meet regularly with the Headteacher and establish a professional working relationship with the Headteacher, and the Senior Leadership Team of the school.

The Chair should also arrange regular catch ups with their Clerk on Microsoft Teams or catch-up phone call once a week for half an hour to discuss LGB business. Rather than send numerous emails, it is good practice to save any non-urgent queries until your weekly catch up.

Role of the Clerk to the Local Governing Body

The Clerk has a crucial role in the smooth running of the LGB as the 'constitutional conscience' of the LGB who is there to guide Governors in how they support and challenge the school. The main purpose of their role is to provide advice on governance, constitutional and procedural matters. This means providing effective administrative support to the LGB and its committees, ensuring the LGB is properly constituted and managing information effectively in accordance with legal requirements.

The Clerk will ensure high standards of governance, adherence to good practice and the efficient and compliant functioning of the LGB by providing support in the following key ways:

1. Administrative and organisational support. For example, proactively organise meetings, produce clear agendas and accurate minutes, issue reminders, keep records.
2. Provide guidance to ensure the LGB works in compliance with the appropriate and regulatory framework whilst understanding the potential consequences of non-compliance. For example, the Clerk should be familiar with the Trust's constitutional documents (Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation) and how delegation and procedures work within the Trust.
3. Advice on procedural matters relating to the operation of the LGB. For example, conflicts of interest and their management, the quorum, eligibility to attend and vote at meetings, recruitment of new Governors.

Effective governance is never passive, and a strong Clerk will also troubleshoot anticipating possible problems (e.g., lack of quorum, exceeding delegated authority, decision deadlines) and suggesting solutions.

Additionally, Clerks need to be mindful of their responsibilities under equality legislation, recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion, and should understand the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people.

The key to effective clerking is the establishment of a strong working relationship between the Clerk and both the Chair and the Headteacher. Rather than send numerous emails, it is good practice to arrange to meet with the Chair on Microsoft Teams or with a phone call once a week for half an hour to discuss LGB business.

Please remember that the Clerk is NOT a Governor (unless a Governor is acting as clerk in an emergency) and should not take part in the discussions / decisions unless they are intervening regarding matters of accuracy and legality.

Not only should the Clerk prepare agendas and circulate papers under the guidance of the Chair of Governors; they are also responsible for the efficient preparation of minutes of the meetings and their circulation. The Clerk will need to maintain a Register of Interests of Governors and update this every year. They must also ensure GIAS is kept up to date and keep careful details of attendance, absence and apologies to enable the Chair to monitor the commitment of each Governor.

The Clerk will be expected to be familiar with the Trust's Governors' Handbook, the Clerking Manual, the Trust's Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation and the LGB Terms of Reference. The Clerk should also read the Government's Clerking Competency Framework. Support is available from the Trust's Governance Officer if advice is required on governance, constitutional and procedural matters.

Role of Staff Governor

The staff Governor brings their unique staff perspective to the strategic decisions and LGB discussion but is no different to other Governors on the LGB. When making decisions as a staff governor, their responsibility is to the whole school community (CYP, staff, responsible adults, and the wider community) and not just the interests of staff members.

Staff Governors help maintain a link between the LGB and school staff but are not a spokesperson or "act on behalf" and they are not held to account by the LGB. They must not bring up individual problems in LGB meetings.

Staff must stick to official channels to express their views and follow the Trust's established staff grievance procedure. If staff members have a collective grievance, they should first approach their line managers. However, if there is a general grievance that is not being addressed, then it can be brought to the LGB's attention by adding an agenda item to the next LGB meeting.

Staff governors have the same right to information as the other governors.

A staff governor cannot be the chair or vice chair of the governing board.

All governors including the staff governor must declare business or personal interests when completing their conflict of interest form that might affect their ability to make impartial decisions. As staff governors are often holding their line managers to account, handling conflicts of interest can be challenging. Conflicts arise where the issues being discussed affect the staff governor or their colleagues. It is therefore not appropriate for staff governors to be involved in board discussions relating to:

- senior leader appraisal or recruitment
- staff restructuring
- pay decisions or reviews
- staff disciplinary, grievance or capability hearings
- exclusion or complaints panels (where they are reviewing their own headteacher's decisions)

Staff governors should declare their interest and remove themselves from discussion and voting on these matters. Staff governors must not sit on salary committees. Similarly, staff Governors should not take on a link role.

It is important for all governors to keep board matters confidential. Staff governors should avoid sharing any information away from LGB or discussing LGB business with other members of staff.

Where decisions do need to be shared with the wider staff body, the LGB should discuss what can be reported on and the staff governor should be clear on how this will happen.

Effective staff governors:

- help other governors to understand the working of the school
- take responsibility for their learning and development as a governor, including attending training
- do not canvas the opinions of staff (they might want to let the LGB know the general feelings of staff but must use their own judgement in decision making)
- act impartially, making decisions that are in the best interests of CYP, staff and the wider community.

22.1 **Role of Parent Governors**

Parent Governors are representative responsible adults rather than representatives of responsible adults. Parent Governors play a vital role on governing bodies, holding the unique position of having a responsible adult's viewpoint of the school. Through the children, they have a first-hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum, and how the school is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables Parent Governors to bring a different perspective to the strategic management of the school. It is important for Parent Governors to establish a rapport with the parental body which elected him/her, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance. Although being available to advise responsible adults on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that Parent Governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no Governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

Achieving a balance between being the impartial representative responsible adult, and the often emotional issues relating to individual children's education, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance include:

- Make yourself available to responsible adults.

- Never press your own child's case at the expense of others.
- Never promise to 'solve a problem' on your own.
- Be wary of bringing an individual's issue to meetings without following the agreed procedures.
- Abide by the agreed protocol regarding agenda items and Any Other Business.
- Keep yourself aware of responsible adult views and concerns.
- Play an active part in Governor meetings.

What are the benefits of being a Parent Governor?

- You have a very privileged and responsible role.
- You have the opportunity to make a difference, not only for your children, but for children in years to come.
- You have the opportunity to make a difference for other responsible adults, and to influence the way in which school works with them.
- You will learn a lot and develop new skills.

How to fulfil your role:

- Attend LGB meetings regularly, and play an active role in committees and decision-making.
- Before making any decision, governors should ask "does this directly further the academy Trust's objectives?".
- Learn all you can about your school.
- Consider how the LGB communicates with responsible adults: could you help them to improve links?
- How accessible is the school – how easy is it for responsible adults to go into school to discuss things with the Headteacher or teachers? Could you give feedback to help the school to be more open and welcoming?
- How accessible are the Governors – do responsible adults ever get the opportunity to meet with them; do they know how to get in touch with the Chair of Governors if they need to? Could you encourage the LGB to be more visible?
- Learn how the school handles complaints, and read the complaints procedure. If another responsible adult approaches you with a complaint, advise them to speak to the Headteacher.
- Be approachable to other responsible adults but make sure you are clear about your role.
- Always represent the school positively.
- As a Governor you are one of a group and must never act alone.
- Always support the decisions of the LGB. Have your say on decisions in meetings, and vote in the way you wish but then support the outcomes of votes – even if you disagree with them.
- **ALWAYS** observe confidentiality. You will handle a lot of highly sensitive and confidential information – do not discuss it with anyone who is not a Governor. Remember, a Governor can be suspended/removed for serious breaches of confidentiality.

How you can help individual responsible adults:

- Occasionally you may be approached by other responsible adults asking for help, or wanting to make a complaint about something the school is, or is not, doing.
- Make it clear you cannot act for the LGB.

- Do not raise expectations that the school will 'put it right' – there may be underlying issues or background that you are not aware of.
- Keep an open mind – there are at least two sides to every story.
- You may need to explain why the LGB has made a decision in a certain way, so be prepared.

What to do if you experience a conflict between being a responsible adult and being a Governor:

- This can happen – especially if you think the LGB is making decisions which you feel will adversely affect your child(ren).
- If a difficulty arises, take a step back and think things through as objectively as you can.
- If you are concerned, talk to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors.
- Make sure you do not break confidentiality when discussing your concerns outside LGB meetings.

Where to get help, advice and support:

- From other Governors.
- From the Headteacher.
- From the Chair of Governors.
- From the Clerk to the LGB.
- Arrange a Governor mentor or 'buddy' to help you through the first few months.
- Attend the induction training arranged by the Trust's Alliance of Leading Learning.

Although this is a very delicate role, there is ample support and training available. Effective Parent Governors will find working alongside the other members of the LGB both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the LGB fulfils its duties to all children.

22.2 Link Trustees & Governors with Additional Responsibilities

The Trust believes that strong governing boards, acting as part of the Trust's monitoring and evaluation of progress in its schools, are key partners to the Trust's success. This guide supports governors and trustees in keeping questions pertinent to the Trust's strategic priorities and vision. It provides a framework for effective questioning and structures purposeful interrogation of information/data that will help extend challenge to senior leaders and further develop their strategic planning.

Trustees:
Link trustees are appointed to take the lead on an area of their governing board's responsibilities or to help monitor a specific strategic or improvement priority. This can be an opportunity to utilise an individual's experience and skill set. Link roles do not remove the Board of Trustees' collective responsibility.

Local Governing Board:
A link governor is a member of the governing board appointed to oversee a specific aspect of the work of the school. The Department for Education (DfE) says there should be:

A senior, board-level lead to take leadership responsibility for your school's/trust's safeguarding arrangements.

A link governor or committee with oversight of special educational needs and disability (SEND), and (If your school provides secondary education:) A member of the board who takes a strategic interest in careers education and guidance, and encourages employer engagement.

Your board should also consider having a link governor with responsibility for governor training and development, who makes sure everyone has the right skills to contribute to the board. Otherwise, you can choose how you delegate duties and decide whether your board would benefit from link governors for other areas.

Link roles do not remove the board's collective responsibility. As such, the governing board should ensure that the area assigned is covered on the agenda of full governing board and committee meetings as appropriate, so that all members of the governing board remain informed of the key issues, strategy outcomes and areas for development.

Link Governor/Trustee roles and responsibilities:

This will vary according to the remit of the role, but link governors will generally:

- make pre-arranged visits to the school, with a clear focus
- keep the governing board informed about the area for which they're responsible, and act as a link between governors and staff
- support the member of staff who is responsible for their particular area/subject
- develop knowledge in their specialist area and take part in relevant training
- make sure the school has relevant policies in place
- monitor the implementation of the school's strategy in their specialist area

Link Governors/Trustees should seek to:

- build productive working relationships and establish regular contact with relevant staff, while having due regard to their work-life balance;
- ensure the Trust/school have necessary policies and procedures are in place and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their implementation;
  arrange focused visits, based on strategic priorities, to the school(s) – normally a maximum of one visit each term, following an agreed visits protocol (see page 26 of the Governor's Handbook);
- report back to the LGB/Board of Trustees following monitoring visits or discussions with staff;
- be well informed and prepared ahead of meetings with staff or the board by reading any relevant information, such as policies and data;
- keep the LGB/Board of Trustees fully informed about issues and actions in the assigned area; and
- participate in relevant personal development to improve skills and knowledge.

Appendix A contains the LGB's terms of reference as outlined in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Link Governor Roles Linked to Strategic Priorities			
People First	Anytime, Anywhere Learning	Belonging	Working Today to Protect Tomorrow
Safeguarding, Child Protection and P/CLA			
SEND			
Training and CPD* Leadership and Management incl. Recruitment and Retention* Internal Quality Assurance Pupil Premium Strategy *including for Governors	Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Assessment, Data and Outcomes Literacy and Numeracy EYFS | Sixth Form SEND	Values and Culture Behaviour and Attitudes Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Christian Distinctiveness Personal Development CEIAG Transition (internal and to new settings) Induction	Health and Safety Sustainability Risk Management

The Trust has further guidance on Link Governor roles, their responsibilities and questions they should ask which can be found HERE

23 Training for Trustees/Governors

23.1 **Buddy / Mentor**

New Governors are offered the opportunity to be paired up with a buddy/mentor to provide them with guidance and help. Please speak to your Clerk if you would like to do this.

23.2 **Training Courses**

Some of the course available to Trustees and Governors are listed below (*these courses are mandatory).

***Safeguarding Level 1 Raising Awareness and Protecting Children (mandatory training course every three years)**

This awareness session will enable participants to explore issues and deepen understanding in respect of signs and symptoms of abuse, dealing with child protection disclosure and safeguarding procedures. It is completed through NGA Learning Link.

Prevent Anti-Radicalistation (mandatory training course every two years)

This half hour training session is completed online and teaches Governor's awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and radicalised groups. It must be completed every two years.

***Safer Recruitment (training course for Governors on recruitment panels, every three years)**

Governors who sit on recruitment panels must complete this training through the NSPCC. Please book through Helen Lloyd in the Alliance of Leading Learning.

NGA Learning Link

Extensive choice of training courses and webinars covering all learning for Governors and Trustees.

Academies Handbook

Training completed through National College.

There is a training library with recordings of comprehensive complaints and exclusions training from Browne Jacobson and recordings of Bitesize Governance workshops including understanding data and your SOF, understanding the Academies Handbook, strategic v operational, the Governors' role in monitoring the SCR, monitoring attendance, etc. These can be found under the Trust's Governance folder under Governor Training. 1. Training Recordings Links.pdf

Further training courses are available through our Alliance of Leading Learning (A.L.L) so please discuss any training needs with the Trust's Governance Officer.

24 The Local Governing Body and Ofsted

Governors should be aware how Ofsted will judge their effectiveness. This applies to both Trustees and Governors, and you should refer to the Terms of Reference for your roles. This will help you to understand that your involvement is strategic, and not in any way to be engaged in the day-to-day management of the school and its functions.

Each school in the Trust is inspected individually. Inspectors meet with the Chair of Trustees, school Link Trustee and local Governors from LGBs. Ofsted inspect governance under the 'leadership and management judgement to establish if:

- the Trust has a clear vision, ethos and strategy set by the Board of Trustees;
- a clear and robust scheme of delegation has been agreed and is easily accessible;
- both the Board of Trustees and LGBs are aware of their specific remits;
- resources are managed well, with effective scrutiny and oversight; and
- those governing hold leaders to account for the quality of education.

The Ofsted judgements are also based upon how well the Governors:

- contribute to the school's self-review and evaluation, and understand its strengths and weaknesses;
- analyse monitoring data, particularly CYP progress;
- support and strengthen school leadership;
- provide challenge, and hold the Headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, CYP' achievement and CYP' behaviour and safety;
- assist in overseeing the Health and Safety of all students, staff and visitors; and ensuring safeguarding for all students.
- use performance management systems, including the performance management of the Headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management;
- ensure solvency and probity, and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively;
- operate in such a way that statutory duties are met, and priorities are approved;
- engage with key stakeholders;
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.

It is important that this detailed view of the school is shared and understood across the whole LGB. Often inspectors will want to meet with more than the Chair of Governors who, in any case given the short notice of inspections, may not be available when the inspectors are in the school.

Governors should become familiar with the key data sets which show them how the school is performing. This will include the DfE Data Dashboard, and Data Reports produced by the Senior Leadership Group including the School Overview File and School Development Plan.

At every LGB meeting there should be an update on CYP achievement, including attendance and exclusions. There are key questions for Governors to ask about any data they are presented with regarding school improvement:

- What does it mean?
- Why is it like this?
- What are we doing about it?
- How successful have we been so far?

The LGB will meet at specific times of the year, and the Governors should expect to be able to gauge progress in the school from one meeting to the next. In order to do this, Governors need to ask:

- Where were we at the last report?
- Where are we now?
- What progress we have made?
- How do we know?
- Where is the evidence?

This is appropriate challenge in the relationship between the LGB, and the Headteacher, and Senior Leadership Group of the school. To ensure that this good practice is seen by Ofsted**, it is crucial that this is clearly minuted by the Clerk to the LGB to enable Ofsted to see the proper levels of challenge and support by the LGB.**

Questions Ofsted inspectors may ask

The following are examples of the type of questions that LGBs may be asked when meeting with inspectors:

1. What is the board's vision for the school (and/or Trust)?
2. What is the strategy for achieving the vision – who determines this?
3. How do those governing ensure that progress is made on strategic priorities?
4. What training is there for those who govern?
5. Do your pupils feel safe whilst at school? How do you know?
6. How do you know safeguarding is robust? What staff and governance training takes place?
7. What sources of information do you use to find out the views of responsible adults, staff and pupils?
8. How is pupil premium funding being used and what impact is it having?
9. How do you ensure that pupils gain the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens?
10. How do you monitor attendance and absence rates?

Please see Appendix F – NGA guidance on navigating Ofsted inspection. Further guidance is also available from the Trust's Governance Officer.

25 Twenty-one questions every governing board should ask itself

Board culture and practice

1. **Governance culture**
   The board is a committed team that works well with the trust's executive leader and the governance professional.

2. **Board leadership**
   The chair is appointed annually, leads with integrity, is supported by a vice chair and ensures the board stays strategic and does not shy away from making the right decisions for the trust.

3. **Governance professional**
   The trust employs a dedicated governance professional who coordinates the delivery of governance support across the trust, ensuring independent clerking of board committees and academy committees.

4. **Skills and diversity**
   Succession is planned, the recruitment process is designed to ensure trustees are recruited to fill skills gaps and ensure diversity of knowledge, experience, perspectives and approaches.

5. **Induction and ongoing development**
   There is a quality induction programme in place for new trustees and a culture of ongoing governance training and development.

Board structure

6. **Separation**
   Each layer of governance is separate with no overlaps, conflicts or opportunities for undue influence.

7. **Size**
   The trust board is the right size with a proportionate committee structure.

8. **Delegation**
   The scheme of delegation and committee terms of reference are clear and fully aligned with the responsibilities allocated to each tier of governance.

9. **Local governance**
   Guidance, support and communication with academy committees is effective, enabling academy committees to play a meaningful role in the governance of the trust.

Core functions

10. **Values, ethics and culture**
    Trustees and executive leaders have agreed the trust's values which are evident in policies and practice, ensure ethical behaviours and underpin a healthy culture across the trust.

11. **Vision**
    Trustees and executive leaders have established a clear and ambitious vision which describes what the trust should look like in three to five years and what pupils will achieve.

12. **Strategy**
    Trustees have agreed with the executive leader a limited number of measurable strategic aims which need to be met in order for the trust to achieve its vision; these aims drive the board's business.

13. The board as employer

The board acknowledges its responsibilities as employer of trust staff and ensures the development and wellbeing of the executive leader.

14. Accountability – quality of education

Trustees hold the executive leader to account for the quality of education that pupils receive, ensuring school leaders develop, implement and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.

15. Accountability – financial oversight

Trustees understand how the trust's funds are managed and hold the executive leader to account for the efficiency, sustainability and impact of the trust's financial planning and management.

16. Accountability – stakeholders

Trustees know their schools and their stakeholders and take into account their views when making key decisions, reporting annually on the work of the trust board.

Compliance

17. Statutory requirements

Trustees are confident that the trust meets all legal requirements and takes into account statutory guidance, including on conflicts of interest and related party transactions.

18. Managing risk

Trustees are involved in the identification and assessment of key strategic risks.

Evaluation and impact

19. Evaluation of trustee contribution

A 360° appraisal process is used to evaluate the chair's effectiveness, and the chair or vice chair reviews trustees' individual contributions and effectiveness each year.

20. Evaluation of board practice

The board undertakes annual self-evaluation and commissions an external evaluation every three years; these are reported to the trust's members.

21. Evaluation of impact

Trustees are confident that the decisions the board makes have led to both improved outcomes for pupils and ongoing financial stability for the trust.

Source: NGA

26 Governor Procedures and Protocols

26.1 Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct

This code sets out the expectations on, and commitment required, from Trustees and Governors, in order for the Board of Trustees and LGBs to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community.

The Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct can be found under the Governors section on the school website and must be read and signed by both Trustees and Governors every year.

Failure to comply with the Trust's Code of Conduct may result in a Governor/Trustee being disqualified, suspended or removed. The Trust has a separate policy "Procedure for the removal of Trustees & Governors" which sets out the framework and procedure for doing so.

26.2 Governor Visits and Protocol

Visiting the School

Governors have a duty to get to know the school and are encouraged to involve themselves in school activities. Visiting the school during school hours is an important part of a Governor's role, enabling them to develop an understanding of the school beyond what is gained by attending LGB meetings.

Governors should arrange their visits in advance with the Headteacher and Clerk. **The Clerk must keep a record of Governor engagement with their school e.g. attendance at a music performance, award ceremonies, attending committee meetings such as staff appeal, complaint, exclusions. There is a proforma that Governors must complete when they have formally visited a school/attended a meeting in their Link Governor role. This form along with model examples can be found HERE**

The LGB should plan visits to cover a wide range of schoolwork, and each visit should have a clear purpose.

School visits by Governors can also help them to fulfill their role of 'critical friend' to the Headteacher. Observing the school day in action can be a way of gathering information to ask questions about, or to use towards future policies.

However, visits do not replace professional inspection, or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Headteacher.

Visit Focus

Although not an exhaustive list, visits focus on:

- the Trust's strategic priorities
- Link Governor areas of responsibilities;
- particular subjects, key stages or classes;
- the use made of the buildings or the site;
- the condition and maintenance of the premises;
- special educational needs;

- literacy and numeracy;
- the use of ICT equipment;
- the impact on the school of any changes e.g. reduced classes in a key stage;
- relative numbers of questions and responses to the teacher from boys to girls.

Informal Visits

Visits can also take place in an informal capacity. Everyone will be made clear about the capacity in which they are visiting, not to confuse the role.

- The Chair making a regular visit to see the Headteacher.
- To lend a helping hand with a school event.
- To obtain information from the office relating to a LGB/Committee meeting.
- To help in a class.
- To speak to a teacher in relation to your own child.
- To attend a school function or educational visit.

Purpose of Visits

Potential benefits:

For Governors

- To recognise and celebrate success.
- To develop relationships with the staff.
- To get to know the children.
- To recognise different teaching styles.
- To understand the environment in which teachers teach.
- To monitor policies in action.
- To inform decision making.
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them.

For teachers

- To ensure Governors understand the reality of the classroom.
- To get to know Governors.
- To understand better the Governors' roles and responsibilities.
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion.
- To highlight the need for particular resources.

What a Visit is Not About

- A form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of the teacher.
- Checking on progress of own children.
- Pursuing personal agenda.
- Monopolising school/teacher time.

Protocols for Visits

Before a visit a Governor will:

- <u>contact the Headteacher and agree a date, time and focus for the visit;</u>

- ensure that they are familiar with visitors guide and health and safety procedures, including what to do in the event of a fire;
- 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 Headteacher/Subject Leader;
- work with the Assistant Headteacher/Subject Leader to ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them;
- discuss with the coordinator if any supporting information is available, eg Ofsted Report, improvement plan, performance data;
- be clear beforehand exactly what you are looking for: try to prepare questions and submit to staff in advance.
- Governors attached to a department or class should arrange an appointment to discuss how to proceed with the link arrangement.
- Governors must always make an appointment with the Clerk when they want to come into school, not just drop in.
- Inform the Clerk of the visit who must keep a record of all visits in the Governor engagement log.

During the visit a Governor will:

- arrive on time, sign in at Reception and display their visitor ID badge at all times.
- clarify the timetable with the Assistant Headteacher/Subject Leader and keep to the timetable.
- at all times observe protocol and be sensitive to the surroundings.
- remember they are there to observe and inform themselves. They will intrude as little as possible on the teachers' time.
- only go into classes when invited to do so by the teacher.
- interact but not interrupt. They may talk to CYP in class only when invited to do so by the teacher.
- raise concerns with the teacher if you see something that worries you.
- only attend departmental or staff meetings when invited to do so.
- not go into the staff room unless they are invited.
- ensure that visits are no longer than 1 hour in length.
- be calm and enjoy the visit.

Please note that members of staff are always free to say that it is not convenient for a Governor to come in at any particular time. Please also remember that you are making the visit on behalf of the LGB and that it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the LGB;

Things observed during a visit:

- Relationship between staff and CYP.
- Relationships between CYP.
- Variety of teaching styles.
- Availability and role of support staff.
- Behaviour and attitude of CYP.
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and CYP.
- How the CYP are grouped.

- How different abilities are catered for.
- Children's work.
- Displays.
- Ethos.
- Equality of opportunity apparent.
- Use of space and working conditions.
- Quality and quantity of equipment and resources.
- Dissemination, monitoring, evaluation and review (see Appendix A).

After the visit a Governor will:

- discuss what they have observed with the teacher and use the opportunity to clarify any issue they are unclear about;
- thank the teacher for supporting them in their role as a Governor;
- refer to the purpose of the visit and consider together whether it has been achieved;
- meet with the Headteacher to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose;
- complete the Governor Visit Proforma (Appendix B and under Governor & Trustee Link Visits), reporting on the focus - the completed form is given to the Headteacher and Clerk and then, after any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the LGB and relevant staff;
- report back to the LGB as appropriate (the visit report for the LGB must be available for the next full meeting): Governors must report without giving opinions and where possible, individuals should not be able to be identified.

Annual Programme of Visits

A programme of visits should be planned and spread evenly across the school year in consultation with the Headteacher and the member of staff responsible for the area being monitored/visited.

Monitoring and Review of the School Visit Policy

This policy is monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that visits are achieving the potential benefits identified, to investigate any unexpected benefits, and to evaluate how the school can make practice even better.

27 Appendix A - Dissemination, monitoring, evaluation and review

Governor monitoring can take several forms:

- CYP interviews.
- Meeting with subject/leader.
- Snapshot of a lesson.
- Walk around the school.

Aims:

- To know and understand the level of enjoyment CYP have for the subject.
- To understand what CYP like best/least in the subject.
- To know the standards achieved in the subject.
- To know what steps are being taken to improve the subject area.
- To report main findings back to the full LGB.

*We invite Governors who are visiting subject leaders to participate in a **Learning Walk**. This should take up to 30 minutes. During the Learning Walk you can expect the subject leader to speak with you about areas listed below. Please raise questions if you need clarification or more information. Ideally the Learning Walk should take place while the children are in class.*

Pupil interviews: (suggested questions to ask a small group of children when walking around the classrooms)

These questions will help you gain an understanding of pupil attitudes toward the subject:

- Tell me about what you are learning today.
- Do you like (select curriculum area being monitored).
- Tell me what you most like doing in (select curriculum area being monitored).
- Is there anything you do not like in (select curriculum area being monitored).

Key questions for subject/learning link Governor discussion with subject leader: (Foundation subjects)

- What is your vision for the subject?
- Do you have a set of minimum expectations?
- What were the Ofsted findings about the subject? (this question is mainly for literacy, maths, science and ICT. Other subjects may have been the focus of a curriculum inspection)
- What are the strengths of the subject? How do you know?
- How do you keep a track of standards and progress in the subject?
- What improvements have you made/planned for this year in the subject?
- What resources does the school have for the subject and how are these organised?
- Are there any additional resource needs?
- How do you help develop other teachers' skills in teaching the subject?

28 Appendix B - Record form for a Governor's School visit

School:
Governor Visit Proforma

Date:	**Name of Governor:**
Governor's Area of Responsibility:	**Member(s) of Staff seen during visit:**
Reason for Visit (e.g. links with priorities and strategies in the School's Development Plan, routine monitoring, any other specific focus):	
Preparation/background to visit: (e.g. reading policy, discussion with Headteacher, review of school in line with the strategies in School Development Plan):	
Observations and comments by the Governor: (e.g., what you saw; questions asked with answers given; what you learned relating to the focus of the visit). Please include any constructive challenge.	
Things I liked / what worked well:	
Things I need clarified or would like to know more about:	

Impact of visit / comments related to the School Development Plan
3 key questions I would like to raise at the next LGB meeting: **1.** **2.** **3.**
Actions for the LGB to consider or clarifications needed: **(e.g., the way resources are allocated; the way the school communicates; progress in implementing strategies in the school development plan or a key policy)**
Date for next visit:
Any other information / further comments:
Signed by Governor:

29 Appendix C - Useful Links, Guidance and Resources

Trust Governance library & Governor training library & Trust policy library

NGA Learning Link

The Trust's Websites
Marches Academy Trust Website – www.marchesacademytrust.co.uk
The Trust's individual school websites

Ofsted Resources
Find an Ofsted Inspection Report – https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk
All published inspection reports are available via this link.

Ofsted Parent View – https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk
Resources for responsible adults to give feedback on schools and you can also view results.

Department for Education
https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/
Find schools in England and view school performance, characteristics, and spend per CYP data and for academies, their latest set of financial accounts. You can find schools using a map, search or follow the quick links

DfE Governance - https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/running-school-college

Shropshire Learning Gateway (Resource from Shropshire Council)
https://www.shropshirelg.net/

Username: marches.staff
Password: SANDlavender46

Other interesting websites
National Governors Association – www.nga.org.uk
NSPCC - https://www.nspcc.org.uk/

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP)
Highlights some of the risks associated with online environments.
www.ceop.police.uk

30 Appendix D - Directory of Trustees and Governors

A directory of all Trustees and Governors with contact details and bios is available in the Trust's Governance library HERE. All email addresses can be found on Microsoft Outlook's Global Contact List in your @mmat.co.uk account, except where indicated.

31 Appendix E - Glossary of Terms used in meetings and within reports

Academies – Publicly funded independent secondary schools with sponsors from the private or voluntary sectors or from churches or other faith Sponsors. Academies have different governance arrangements from other schools.
Academy committee – a committee of the trust board in a MAT. The role and responsibility of any committee is defined in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.
Academies Handbook - a handbook issued by the EFA that sets out the financial management and financial governance requirements that apply to all academy trusts
ACL – Adult and Community Learning
AD(H)D – Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder
Admissions – In community schools' part of a Local Authority policy but in foundation and voluntary aided schools the LGB is responsible for setting a policy
Admissions Code - A document providing statutory guidance on schools admission with which all schools must comply
Admissions Register – Register of the details of CYP in alphabetical order.
AfL- Assessment for Learning
Artificial Intelligence (AI) - the application of computer systems able to perform tasks or produce output normally requiring human intelligence, especially by applying machine learning techniques to large collections of data; artificial intelligence.
A-level - General Certificate of Education Advanced level – usually completed by some 16-18 year-olds after GCSE
Articles of Association - The articles of association is the formal governing document for an academy and sets out its rules for operating, including the composition of the governing board
ASCL Association of School and College Leaders - a headteacher union
Assessment without levels - A common phrase to describe changes to the primary curriculum. Grade descriptions and levels have now been removed from the national curriculum and it is up to primary schools to decide how they track pupil progress and attainment. Children will still sit SATs exams in KS1 and KS2 as a national benchmark, however they will no longer be given a grade. Instead, they will be given a scaled score, with a score of 100 or above showing that a pupil has met national expectations
A.L.L – Alliance of Leading Learning, Marches Academy Trust's own training facility
APA – Annual Performance Assessment
Appraisal – The process of assessing how well a member of staff is carrying out his or her job
APS – Average Points Score
AS – Asperger's Syndrome
ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder
Associate member – A person who is appointed by the LGB to work with a committee but who is not a governor. They do not have voting rights.
AST - Advanced Skills Teacher
ATL Association of Teachers and Lecturers – a union for education professionals.
Attainment 8 - A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. Measures the achievement of a pupil across English, maths and six further qualifications (three of which must count in theEBacc measure).
Attainment targets - These establish what children of different abilities should be expected to know and be able to do by the end of each key stage of the national curriculum.

Attainment 8 (A8) A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. Measures the achievement of a pupil across English, maths and six further qualifications (three of which must count in the EBacc measure)
AWPU - Age-weighted pupil unit – the sum of money allocated to the school for each pupil according to age. This is the basic unit of funding for the school.
At Risk Register – Children identified by Social Services or Schools as in danger of emotional, physical or sexual abuse or mental cruelty from within their families
Ballot – A method of voting, normally secret
Baseline assessment – An assessment of a child's skills and ability usually made by a teacher within the first 7 days of school entry
Basic skills – Reading, writing and arithmetic
Benchmarking - Comparing school expenditure with broadly similar schools from the LA, the region and nationally
BES – Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
BEST – Behaviour and Education Support Team
Best Value – A policy confirming that governing bodies will work with regards to economy, efficiency and effectiveness
BST – Behaviour Support Team
BVP – Best value policy or plan
CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Capital Expenditure – Spending on projects, improvements, and extensions to the school's land and buildings
Carry-forward – Money left unspent at the end of the financial year that is carried forward to the school's budget for the following year
CAF – Common Assessment Framework
Casting Vote – An additional vote to be used by the Chair of Governors if an equal number of votes are cast for and against a motion
CEO Chief executive officer – the lead professional and head of the executive branch for a group of academies known as a multi academy trust (MAT). Although not being a headteacher in any school, they will be ultimately accountable to the governing board for all aspects of the MAT as a whole.
CFO Chief financial officer – the individual who leads the finance department, such as the finance director, business manager or equivalent.
Clerk - The clerk is the 'constitutional conscience' of the governing board. They provide advice on governance, and constitutional and procedural matters. They also offer administrative support to the governing board and relay information on legal requirements.
Child Protection Register – A central register maintained by Social Services which lists children in the area who are considered to be suffering from, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and for whom there is a protection plan
Collaboration – An agreement between two or more LGBs to work together on one particular issue. They keep their individual LGBs, but may set up a joint committee to which they can delegate powers.
Collective Worship – All maintained schools should provide for collective worship for their CYP. The precise nature at a foundation or voluntary school will depend on the religious character of the school.
Community Governors – Governors appointed by the LGB to represent community interests. Community Governors can be persons who live or work in the community served by the school or

persons who do not work or live close to school but are committed to the good governance and success of the school.
Competency framework for governance - A document developed by the DfE, setting out the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective governance.
Competitive tendering - Obtaining quotes or tenders from alternative suppliers before awarding contracts
Connexions – Government service offering an advice and support service for young people
Contingency Fund – Money set aside for unexpected costs
Core subjects – English, maths and science
COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
Coursework – Work completed over a period of time which counts towards a final mark along with an end of course examination in the case of GCSE and regular tests in the case of GNVQ
CPD - Continuing professional development for school staff or the governing board
CPI – Child Protection Issue
CT – Children's Trust
Curriculum – A broad definition including not just the list of subjects taught but all the CYP' learning experiences at school and the processes of learning as well as the knowledge that is acquired
DDA - Disability Discrimination Act
DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families
DFC – Devolved Formula Capital
Delegated budget – Money provided to schools which governors can manage at their discretion
Delegated powers – Authority given to a committee or the Headteacher to take action on behalf of the LGB
Delegation – A process where one body or person gives another body or person authority to take decisions on a particular matter
DfE Department for Education – the government department responsible for schools and children (formerly DCSF)
Directed time - Time when a teacher must be available to carry out duties, including attending staff and responsible adult meetings, under the direction of the headteacher – a maximum of 1,265 hours in a school year
Disapplication - A term used where national curriculum requirements may not apply to a pupil
DSG Dedicated School Grant – funding from central government to the LA, the majority of which is then delegated directly to individual schools through the LA's funding formula
Diocese – The area over which a bishop has jurisdiction
Directors of Faculty – Subject leads
DRC – Disability Rights Commission
DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant
Dyslexia – Used to describe the specific learning disorder of children who have difficulty in acquiring reading, spelling, writing and numeracy skills
EAL – English as an Additional Language
EBacc - A school performance measure based on achievement of GCSEs in 'core academic subjects' of English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language.
EBD – Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
ECF - Early Career Framework a new requirement for a two-year programme of support and development for new teachers after they complete initial teacher training. It is compulsory for all schools to provide a two-year, ECF-based programme of support for their newly qualified

teachers from September 2021 to ensure that Early Career Teachers (ECTs) receive a consistent approach to their induction, regardless of where they are starting their career.
ECT – Early Careers Teacher the term replaces newly qualified teacher (NQT). In addition to the 10% timetable reduction that Early Career Teachers (ECTs) receive in their first year of induction, ECTs will also receive a 5% timetable reduction in the second year of induction.
EDIB - Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging is essential for both our workforce and our CYP. By raising awareness of all strands of diversity, how to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations, we are empowering our workforce and preparing our CYP to become good global citizens; appreciating and celebrating the diverse society in which we live.
EDP – Education Development Plan which each LA is required to prepare setting out its strategies for improving standards in schools and raising CYP attainment.
Education Forum - Established by the government as a consultative group including the National Governors' Association (NGA), the Local Government Association (LGA) and all the teaching and headteacher unions.
EEF Education Endowment Foundation.
EFA Education Funding Agency – it is responsible for all revenue and capital funding for schools and is part of the DfE.
EHC plan Education, health and care plan – the document that replaces statements of SEN and learning difficulties assessments for children and young people with special educational needs.
EOC – Equal Opportunities Commission.
EP – Educational Psychologist.
Equal Opportunities policy – A LGB's thinking and practice on issues of equality surrounding gender, race, sexuality, disability and class.
ESG Education Services Grant – Introduced in 2013 to replace the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) to make funding of education services more appropriate for increasing number of academies. The ESG gives local authorities and academy trusts money to fund their schools' services on a per pupil basis as an unringfenced grant
ESO Education Supervision Order, which LAs may apply for to deal with cases of poor attendance at school.
Ethos The morals, values and beliefs that do, or at least should, underpin the school culture.
EWO Education welfare officer – a professional worker employed to help CYP and responsible adults who visits pupils' homes and deals with attendance problems and other welfare matters in co-operation with the school.
Exclusion The temporary or permanent removal of a pupil from school
Exclusion – The temporary or permanent banning of a CYP by the Headteacher teacher for serious breaches of the school's behaviour and discipline policy.
Ex-officio – Someone who is a Governor by virtue of holding a particular office e.g. Vicar
Extended Schools – Schools that provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of the pupils, their families and the wider community.
EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage 2 – 5 years old (nursery & reception)
Failing School – A school identified as requiring special measures following an unsatisfactory Ofsted inspection
Family Centre – Provides pre-school education and opportunities for responsible adults to be involved
Federation – Two or more local authority maintained (or community) schools governed by one governing body.
Feeder Schools – Some authorities give priority to children from certain primary schools

FFT – Fischer Family Trust – a non-profit company that provides data and analyses to LAs and schools in England and Wales.
FMSiS – Financial Management Standard in Schools
FOI – Freedom of Information
Form of entry - The number of classes of 30 children that a school admits each year.
Foundation Governors – Governors appointed by the foundation body of a voluntary school for the purpose of securing that the character of the school is preserved and developed, and in particular that the school is conducted in accordance with the provision of any trust deed
Foundation schools – Type of school run by the Local Authority but with more freedom than community schools to manage their school and decide on their admissions. The school's land and buildings are either owned by the LGB or by a charitable foundation.
Free school - A type of academy, either a new school set up in response to responsible adults demand or a fee-paying school joining the state education system
FSM Free school meals – pupils are eligible for FSM if their responsible adults receive certain benefits
FT – Floor Target
FTE – Full Time Equivalent
Funding agreement - The document that sets out the relationship between an academy/MAT and the Education Funding Agency (EFA)/Department for Education (DfE)
GAG General Annual Grant – the main source of revenue funding for academy trusts.
GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education
GTC – The General Teaching Council - an independent professional body for teachers
G&T – Gifted and Talented
HASAW – Health And Safety At Work
HLP – Higher Learning Pupil
HLTA – Higher Level Teaching Assistant
HMCI – Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools
HMI – Her Majesty's Inspectorate
Home-School Agreements – a written contract between school, responsible adults and the CYP. It sets out expectations of attendance, behaviour, standards of education and homework. This is a statutory document for the LGB
HSE – Health and Safety Executive
IAG – Information Advice and Guidance
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
IEP – Individual Education Plan devised for meeting the special education needs of individual CYP with needs over and above that of other children
IIP – Investors in People
Inclusion – used to denote that CYP with special and other needs are included in a mainstream school
Increments – Process by which individuals move through their salary scale until they reach the top
Instrument of Government – A legal document setting out the composition of a LGB
Internal Control - A system which encompasses the policies, processes, tasks, behaviours and other aspects of an organisation which is effective and efficient
ITT – Initial Teacher Training
KS – Key Stages - The four stages of the National Curriculum for CYP aged 5-16
KS1 – CYP aged 5-7
KS2 – CYP aged 7-11

KS3 – CYP aged 11-14
KS4 – CYP aged 14-16
LA – Local Authority (previously known as the LEA – the Local Education Authority)
LAC – Looked After Children
LGA – Local Government Association
LGBTQ+ - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that are not specifically covered by the other five initials.
Liaison Governor – A Governor who acts as a critical friend to the Governor Development Team to monitor the training provision and evaluate the quality of the service provided to all Governors
MAL – More able learners (previously MAP more able pupils)
MAT Multi academy trust – where two or more academies are governed by one Trust (the members) and a Board of Trustees (the Trustees).
MFL – Modern Foreign Languages.
Mixed Ability – A teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together and not streamed or set.
Multi-disciplinary – Two or more professional trained in different specialisms working together to provide support, help and advice.
NAHT National Association of Headteachers – a headteacher union
NAO National Audit Office – scrutinises public spending for parliament. It audits the financial statements of all central government departments, agencies and other public bodies, and reports the results to parliament.
NAPE – National Association for Primary Education, covering the ages from 3 to 13.
NASBM National Association of School Business Managers.
NASUWT National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers – a teaching union
National College National College for Teaching and Leadership –the organisation responsible for national training programmes for school leaders, aspiring school leaders and the development of leaders of children's services. In particular, it is responsible for the National Professional Qualification for Headship, the Chairs of Governors' Leadership Development Programme and National Clerks' Development Programme.
National curriculum This was established by the 1988 Education Reform Act to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education, which is relevant to their needs. Academies do not need to follow the national curriculum, but many still choose to.
National Curriculum – Disapplication - A term used where Curriculum requirements may not apply to a CYP
NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training
NFER National Foundation for Educational Research
NFF - National Formula Funding
NSC National schools commissioner – a civil servant responsible for co-ordinating the work of the eight RSCs
NGA National Governors' Association. The national membership organisation for school governors and trustees
NGfL – National Grid for Learning
NHSP – National Healthy Schools Programme
NLE – National Leaders of Education
NOR – Number On Roll
NOV – Notes Of Visit
NPQH – National Professional Qualifications for Headteachers

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher -Teachers who obtain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) must successfully complete an induction period of three school terms (or equivalent) in order to remain eligible for employment as a teacher in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools
NRA – National Record of Achievement
NTI – Notice to Improve
NTG – Narrowing the Gap
NUT – National Union of Teachers
OCR – Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations Board.
Ofqual – Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator. The body responsible for regulating qualifications, examinations and national curriculum tests in England
Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education. The body which sets standards and arranges school inspections.
PAN – Planned Admissions Number - The number of children the LA (or LGB of an Aided School) determines can be admitted to a school.
Parent Champion – A person appointed where a school is causing concern to ensure good communication with responsible adults to help them influence decisions about the future of the school
Performance Management – A review of teachers' performance both as individuals and in teams. It sets a framework for Headteachers, teacher and their team leaders to establish and review priorities and objectives.
PE and sports premium - Funding for years 1 to 6 to provide additional PE and sport beyond that already provided in the curriculum.
Peripatetic teacher – Normally a teacher who provides specialist instruction e.g. music at a number of schools.
PFI Private finance initiative – enables local authorities to enter into contracts with the private sector for the provision of new and/or improved capital assets (e.g. infrastructure) and related services
PGCE Post-Graduate Certificate of Education PGR
Parent governor representative – elected to serve on a local authority committee discharging the education functions of the LA.
PIB – Pre-Inspection Briefing.
PI Performance indicators (sometimes called key performance indicators). Used to evaluate the success of a school or of a particular activity in which it engages.
PPA Planning, preparation and assessment – 10% guaranteed non-contact time for teachers.
PLASC – Pupil Level Annual Schools Census.
Plenary – The time at the end of a lesson in which the teacher finds out what children have learnt
PPA – Planning, Preparation and Assessment – 10% non-contact time for teachers
Professional Development Days – Non CYP days set aside for teachers to attend for planning, in service training curriculum or staff development
Progress 8 A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. It aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of KS2 to the end of KS4.
Progress File – Formerly the National Record of Achievement. Supports CYP from Year 9 in planning their future progression
Prospectus – Document describing the school's ethos for prospective responsible adults. The Education Act defines sections which must be included to allow responsible adults to compare schools
PRP – Performance Related Pay schools following the STCPD must now ensure teachers' pay is linked to their performance.

PRS – Pupil Referral Service
PRU – Pupil Referral Unit alternative education provision for pupils unable to attend a mainstream
PSA – Parent Support Adviser
PSHE – Personal, Social and Health Education
PSA – Parent Support Adviser – member of school staff offering specific but impartial advice to parents
PSP – Pastoral Support Programme/Plan for CYP at serious risk of permanent exclusion
PTA – Parent Teacher Association
PTR – Pupil/Teacher Ratio, calculated by dividing the number of CYP in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers
Public Sector Equality Duty - Its decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010
Pupil premium - Funding allocated to schools to support pupils eligible for FSM, in care, or who have responsible adults in the armed forces.
Pupil profile - Broad evaluation of a pupil's personality, interests and capabilities – this forms part of the pupil's record of achievement.
QTS – Qualified Teacher Status
Quorate – A meeting is quorate if a sufficient number of members are present. Decisions can only be ratified if a meeting is quorate.
Quorum - The minimum number of members present at a meeting before decisions can be made
RAISEonline - Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Self-Evaluation is the web-based system to disseminate school performance data to schools produced nationally
RA – Relative Attainment
RAP – Raising Attainment Plan
RSCs Regional schools commissioners – civil servants who act on behalf of the secretary of state. Their responsibilities include intervening in underperforming academies and free schools, making decisions on conversion to academy status, and encouraging and deciding on applications for academy sponsors. There are eight RSCs serving different regions, reporting to the schools commissioner
Record of Achievement ROA – A profile detailing the pupil's formal and informal achievements in secondary school. May include samples of work and pupil's own self-assessment
Remodelling – Remodelling is set out in a national agreement that aims to reform the workforce. It is about giving teachers more time and support in order to raise standards, increase job satisfaction and improve the status of the profession
Resolution - A formal decision which has been proposed, seconded and agreed – not necessarily by a vote – at a meeting
Revenue funding- Revenue funding can be spent to provide services and buy items that will be used within a year. Examples include salaries, heating, lighting, services and small items of equipment
RI – **Registered Inspector**, who is authorised by Ofsted to lead an inspection team
SACRE – Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. Local statutory body which advises on religious education and collective worship
SATs Standard assessment tasks – used for national curriculum assessment
School census A statutory return that takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. **Maintained schools and academies should take part in the census**
School Profile – A report by governors on the school's performance, pre-populated with data supplied by the DCSF

SDP – School Development Plan The operational document describing how the school will work towards the strategic priorities set by the governing board.
SEAL – Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
Secondment -The release of staff on a temporary basis for work elsewhere
Secretary of state for education - The senior government minister with responsibility for education. Leads the Department for Education.
SEF – Self/School Evaluation Form
SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability. Learning difficulties for which special educational provision has to be made.
SENDIST - Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal
SENDCo – SEND Co-ordinator. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision in the school
Service level agreement - A contract between a service provider (the local authority or another private sector provider) and a school that defines the level of service expected from the service provider.
Service premium - Funding allocated to schools to support pupils whose parents are serving in HM armed forces, or have at any time since 2011, or who are in receipt of a child's pension from the Ministry of Defence.
Setting - A system of organising pupils into ability groups for particular subjects
SFVS Schools Financial Value Standard – a means for the governing board to assess its financial processes, capabilities and skills.
Scheme of delegation SoD – the key document in a MAT defining which functions have been delegated and to whom, clearly showing the lines of accountability within a trust.
SHA – Secondary Headteachers Association.
Short inspection - A one-day Ofsted inspection carried out at 'good' schools (or special schools, nurseries, and PRUs judged 'outstanding').
SIMS Schools Information and Management System – a computer package to assist schools in managing information on pupils, staff and resources, provided by Capita.
SIP – School Improvement Partner / Plan.
SLT – Senior Leadership Team.
SOF – School Overview File.
SMART Targets – An acronym for School Attainment Targets – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-limited
SMT – Senior Management Team
Special school – Pupils with a statement of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or an education, health and care EHC plan, whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision.
Sponsor - An organisation or person who has received approval from the DfE to support an underperforming academy or group of academies. Examples of sponsors include academies, businesses and charities.
STA Standards and Testing Agency – the government agency responsible for setting national curriculum tests for pupils up to KS2 and managing the assessment of those tests
Staff governor - Elected by those who are paid to work at the schoo
STPCD School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document – an annually published document which forms a part of the contract of all teachers and headteachers in maintained schools in England and Wales. Many academies also follow the STPCD
Strategic plan - The school's strategic document that sets out a small number of key priorities for the school over the next 3-5 years. The governing board should take the lead on developing the strategic plan.

STRB School Teachers' Review Body – makes recommendations to the secretary of state on teachers' pay.
Streaming - Placing pupils in classes according to their ability across a range of subjects.
TA – Teaching Assistant.
Target Setting – Each autumn, governing bodies of all maintained primary and secondary schools must set targets for improving CYP performance
T&L – Teaching and Learning
Teachers TV – A digital television channel and website which enables teachers and schools to learn by sharing practical ideas and information.
Terms of reference The scope and limitations of a committee's activity or area of knowledge.
TES Formerly known as the Times Educational Supplement, a weekly publication providing education news, analysis and opinion for teachers, school leaders and other educators.
TLR Teaching and learning responsibility – payments made to teachers for an additional responsibility.
Threshold – Teachers may apply to be assessed to be paid above the threshold of their incremental ceiling
TLRs – Teaching and Learning Responsibility – additional payment for specific teaching and learning responsibilities over and beyond the normal teaching role
UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service – a central agency for processing applications for university courses
UNISON – Union of local authority, health and other public sector employees
UPS – Upper Pay Spine
Value Added – The progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points – rather than looking at raw results value added also takes into account the prior attainment, thus enabling a judgment to be made about the effect of the school on pupils' current attainment comparing similar CYP nationally between the Key Stages.
VA – Voluntary Aided – Schools with a foundation which appoints most of the governors. The LGB is the admission authority and employs the staff.
VC – Voluntary Controlled – Schools with a foundation which appoints some of the governors. The **LA** (Local Authority) is the admission authority and employs the staff.
Vertical grouping – Classes formed (in primary schools) with CYP of different age groups
Virement – The agreed transfer of money from the budget heading to which it has been allocated to another budget heading.
Virtual school headteacher - Looked-after children are on a virtual school roll, and each local authority will employ an experienced teacher to oversee the educational progress of all children under the care of that particular LA. The virtual school headteacher will have the specialist knowledge to provide extra support to designated teachers. They will also work with professionals in the children's services department of the council and with all schools in the area to promote the education of children in care
Vision - The school's vision should, in a few sentences, describe what the school will look like in three to five years' time
Vocational - A subject that would not be considered academic in the traditional sense. Students in KS4 and KS5 may undertake a vocational apprenticeship or qualification as a viable alternative to GCSEs or A-levels.
VOICE - A teaching union.
Work experience - a planned programme as part of careers education, which enables pupils to sample experience of a working environment of their choice in school time.
YJB – Youth Justice Board.

YOT – Youth Offending Team.

32 Appendix F – NGA guidance on navigating Ofsted inspection

For access to the NGA guide with links click HERE

For Schools & Trusts

Navigating Ofsted inspection

A tool for those governing in multi academy trusts

Updated November 2025

Each school in a multi academy trust (MAT) is inspected individually. Inspectors meet with the trust board, lead governance professional and – depending on the trust's scheme of delegation – local governors from academy committees (local governing bodies) may also attend.

Ofsted inspects governance under the 'leadership and governance' evaluation area to establish if the trust board (or, where certain functions are delegated, the local academy committee):

- is knowledgeable about its statutory duties and carries them out effectively
- has set a clear vision and strategy for the MAT which informs the school's operation
- supports and challenges the school's leaders effectively
- ensures resources are managed well
- holds leaders to account for the quality of education
- has established a clear and robust scheme of delegation that is easily accessible
- holds leaders to account for the school's support and provision for disadvantaged pupils \ and/or wellbeing

The following tool covers:

- areas of focus based on how governance is inspected
- how to demonstrate effective governance through the course of routine board business
- example questions inspectors might ask that can be used to evaluate current practice
- NGA resources that boards can use to review and, where needed, improve practice

Governing board self-evaluation

Demonstrating effective governance	Questions to ask yourself:	NGA resources
The trust board • Ensure all trustees and local governors receive an induction to help them understand their role. • Commission external reviews (covering trust-wide and local governance) when appropriate – every three to five years for a stable and successful trust, more frequently if a trust is experiencing challenges or rapid change. • Oversee regular internal reviews that improve the quality and impact of governance. **All levels of governance** • Conduct a skills audit (at least annually) and address any gaps.	• How do trustees use evidence and self-evaluation to sustain high standards and ensure ongoing improvement? • What mechanisms are in place to ensure governance at all levels is well supported? • How does the board ensure it has the right skills and expertise to fulfil its role?	• Planning induction • Self-evaluation questions • Governing board skills audit • E-learning: Interactive skills audit • External reviews of governance

Vision and strategy

Demonstrating effective governance

The trust board

- Set trust-wide values, vision and strategy (working collaboratively with school/trust leaders and stakeholders).
- Evaluate data that helps to monitor agreed strategy outcomes.

Academy committees

- Understand how the vision and strategy is implemented locally and if it is working.

Questions to ask yourself:

- What is the trust board's vision for the school, and how is it communicated to staff, pupils and parents at the local level? How does the board ensure needs of the local community are being met?
- What are the school's key development priorities, and how are these informed by an accurate understanding of strengths and areas for improvement?
- How does the trust ensure that progress is being made on these priorities and that actions are having the intended impact on pupils?

NGA resources

- Guide to Being Strategic
- E-learning: Monitoring performance data and targets
- E-learning: Creating a new vision

Support and provision for pupils experiencing disadvantage

Demonstrating effective governance

The trust board

- Appoint required link trustees for safeguarding and SEND, work closely with the relevant members of the executive team, ensuring local governor training is in place and effective.
- Monitor headline figures on the numbers of pupils with SEND, the adjustments being made and

Questions to ask yourself:

- How is pupil premium funding being used, and what evidence shows that it is improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils?
- How do you ensure that pupils, including those with SEND and other barriers to

NGA resources

- Disadvantage in education
- Pupil premium monitoring tool
- SEND monitoring and evaluation tool
- Link governors and trustees

resources required to ensure barriers to learning are mitigated. • Monitor the use of pupil premium funding across academies in the trust and ensure it is being spent effectively at school level. • Monitor data across the trust on the attainment, safeguarding concerns, behaviour and exclusions of looked after and previously looked after pupils across the trust – identifying trends and issues (that may suggest resource or capacity needs to be focused on a particular area). **Academy committees** • Appoint a link governor for safeguarding and SEND. • Ensure the safeguarding and SEND policy meets the needs of the school (a trust-wide policy may need to be adapted, particularly for different phases but also to reflect challenges in local communities). • Evaluate school-level data and information, building an understanding of the risks pupils face and the procedures in place to mitigate these. • Monitor the use of pupil premium funding and ensure it is being spent effectively. • Monitor the provision and progress of pupils with SEND to ensure resources, curriculum adaptations and support effectively meet their needs.	learning, gain the essential knowledge and experiences needed to thrive? • How do you monitor attendance and absence rates, and what actions are taken to address persistent absence or patterns of concern?	

Quality of education

Demonstrating effective governance

The trust board

- Oversee the trust's curriculum aims and direction.
- Evaluate headline performance data across the trust, drawing comparisons between schools.

Academy committees

- Know how the trust's curriculum direction is adapted for their context and reflects the local community.
- Evaluate the impact of the curriculum using school-level information and outcomes.

Questions to ask yourself:

- How does the board hold the CEO to account for quality of education, pupil outcomes and wider provision?
- How do you know that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND?
- How do leaders ensure that professional development is high quality, evidence-informed and focused on improving teaching and learning across all phases and subjects?

NGA resources

- Curriculum: the governing board's role
- SEND monitoring and evaluation tool
- Monitoring educational performance

School culture

Demonstrating effective governance

The trust board

- Set the overall values for a positive and inclusive school culture across the trust.
- Ensure trust-wide policies promote high expectations, equity and consistency in how behaviour and wellbeing are supported.

Questions to ask yourself:

- How do trustees/local governors ensure pupils are receiving an enriching school experience?
- How do trustees/local governors assure themselves that leaders model high professional standards and act in the best interests of pupils?

NGA resources

- Improving staff wellbeing
- Flexible working in schools and trusts
- Effective behaviour management
- Pupil mental health and wellbeing
- Equality and diversity

• Monitor trends in behaviour, attendance and wellbeing across all academies to identify strengths and areas for improvement. **Academy committees** • Promote high expectations for pupil behaviour, achievement and wellbeing, and monitor that these are consistently applied. • Ensure that policies and practices encourage respectful relationships, inclusion and a sense of belonging for all pupils and staff. • Understand how the school's culture reflects the trust's values while meeting the needs and character of the local community.	• How do you ensure that all staff feel valued, supported and protected from discrimination, bullying or harassment?	
Stakeholder engagement		
Demonstrating effective governance **The trust board** • Oversee stakeholder engagement mechanisms across the trust, drawing comparisons and sharing good practice. • Ensure stakeholder engagement happens, is effective and influences trust-wide decision-making. **Academy committees** • Engage with staff, parents, pupils and the wider school community.	**Questions to ask yourself:** • What sources of information do you use to understand the views of key stakeholders, and how are these used to shape decision-making? • Are communication channels between the tiers of governance effective? How do you know?	**NGA resources** • E-learning: Stakeholder engagement, the governance role • Engaging with parents and carers • How governing boards can engage with staff • How to use pupil voice

• Monitor staff workload and wellbeing. • Ensure that the school has mechanisms in place to engage with all parents and carers. **All levels of governance** • Use stakeholder insights to support triangulation of information.	• How do leaders ensure that staff workload is manageable and that staff wellbeing is actively supported? • How does the trust engage with other schools, organisations and professionals to share expertise, strengthen practice and support improvement?	

Statutory duties

Demonstrating effective governance	Questions to ask yourself:	NGA resources
The trust board • Provide the framework for policy development. • Accountable for meeting all statutory requirements. **Academy committees** • Ensure that school-level policies meet the needs of the school (with support from the governance professional and trust executives).	• How do trustees assure themselves that statutory duties (including safeguarding, SEND and equality) are being met effectively? • How do you know that safeguarding is robust? Do trustees, local governors and staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training? • What evidence do trustees review to assure themselves that the statutory requirements for the basic curriculum, particularly Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), are implemented and compliant across all key stages? • How do you monitor compliance with health and safety legislation?	• Safeguarding monitoring tool • SEND responsibilities checklist • Health and safety oversight • Equality and diversity • E-learning: Equality, diversity and inclusion • Estates management

More Ofsted resources from NGA

- Guidance on the Ofsted inspection process and summary evaluations of MATs
- Training on Ofsted inspections: what governors and trustees need to know
- Event recording on Ofsted's new Approach to Inspections with Sir Martyn Oliver
- E-learning: an interactive guide to Ofsted inspections

Explore the full range of Ofsted resources