

<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL</b>	
<b>Document Title</b> <b>LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST HANDBOOK FOR GOVERNORS</b>	
<b>Version Number</b> 01	<b>Author(s) (Name &amp; Job Title)</b> Mr. D. Low
<b>Date Approved</b> July 2017	<b>Document Status</b> Live
<b>Effective Date</b> July 2017	<b>Approved By</b> The Loxford School Trust Board of Directors
<b>Superseded Version</b> N/A	<b>Date of Next Review</b> July 2018

# LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST HANDBOOK FOR GOVERNORS SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Updated September 2017

## Abstract

Governance is about providing constructive support and challenge to leaders and managers to enable them to do their job to the best of their ability

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# Loxford School Trust (“the Trust”)

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2017

This guide is underpinned by the following documents:

- The Governance Handbook (January 2017) - DfE
- A Competency Framework for Governance (January 2017) - DfE
- The Academies’ Financial Handbook - EFA

## The Trust’s Scheme of Delegation

(Structure of Governance)

Three tiers of Governance have been developed:

1. The Members’ Board
2. The Board of Trustees/Directors (The term “Trustees” is consistent with the description of this Board’s responsibilities as noted in the Governors’ Handbook<sup>1</sup> (DfE) )
3. Local Governors’ Boards.

Each Board has a distinct role which complements those in the other tiers and which is designed to make the Trust as efficient and effective as possible in delivering effective, quality education to the pupils and students of the schools, securing value for money.

**The Members’ Board** determines the strategic direction of the Trust, including employing the most Senior Executive Leaders and considering recommendations for acquisitions to the Trust.

**The Trustees’ Board** performs the duties of Finance and General Purposes Committees and oversees and challenges the strategic Financial Management of the Trust (also through its Audit Sub-committee), including health and safety, the schools’ estates management, condition and suitability and contractual obligations; the Local Governing Boards oversee and challenge the quality of Teaching and Learning in their respective schools.

**Local Governors’ Boards** have no delegated responsibility from the Board of Trustees of which they are effectively a sub-committee. The prime concern should be the quality of Teaching and Achievement within each academy – the quality of the outcomes for pupils and students and curriculum provision. Local issues will, of course, arise from time to time which, where there are implications for finance or broader management implications, will be referred to the Trustees for discussion and action at their next meeting. LGBs will receive feedback from the Trustees meeting via their representative on that Board or through the Head teacher’s or CEO’s report.

There are a few, essential sub-committees required to meet for specific duties:

- a. **Audit Committee** – which is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees
- b. **Pay Committee** – a further sub-committee of the Board of Trustees considering pay recommendations referred to it as an outcome of the annual performance review cycle – in particular Trust Headteacher pay and that of Trust operational directors, including the Chief Finance Officer.

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<sup>1</sup> Governors’ Handbook January 2017 “Terminology” - page 7

- c. **CEO's Performance Review Panel** – a sub-committee of the Members' Board (**Trust Chair** plus).
- d. **Head teachers' performance Review Panel** for each academy (**LGB Chair** and an other / others)
- e. **Pupil Discipline Panels** for each academy (constituted as and when necessary)
- f. **Staff Discipline Panels** for each academy and/or the Trust (constituted as and when necessary)
- g. **Grievance Panels** for each school and/or the Trust (constituted as and when necessary)
- h. **Appeals Panels**, constituted when required to review the work of any of the above committees (excluding the Audit Committee) as part of Grievance Procedures and other Policies subject to formal appeal procedures.

Wherever possible the Clerks to the Boards will form these ad hoc panels from LGB members. Occasionally members of other LGBs may be asked to fill places in support of other Trust academies.

## What we require of Governors and Trustees

All Governors, Trustees and Members within the Loxford School Trust, apart from those who serve ex-officio, work on a voluntary basis. All those involved in Governance must have a Disclosure and Barring Service check<sup>2</sup>. Some details about those involved in governance must be published, both on the School/Trust websites and also on **Edubase**<sup>3</sup>.

***“Governance is about overseeing the success of the school. It is about agreeing priorities and monitoring progress towards them. It is not about running or managing the school or college – that is the job of paid professionals. Governance is about providing constructive support and challenge to leaders and managers to enable them to do their job to the best of their ability. Strong governance is becoming all the more essential as schools and colleges become more autonomous.”***

“Your governing body has a vital strategic role. The Government and Ofsted have high expectations of your ability to hold your headteachers and principals to account and drive improvement.

While you have a constitution that determines the number and type of people who will make up your governing body, once around the table, all your governors must simply govern in the best interests of learners. This means that you need to recruit governors not primarily because of who they are, but because of what they can contribute to the effective working of your governing body.” – National Governors Association (NGA)

**The work of governors is highly valued.** Within Loxford School Trust (“The Trust”) we have a clear model of Governance at each tier which is subject to (at least) annual review. We also require all Governors annually (or on appointment, if that falls outside of the annual cycle) to sign, and agree to comply with, our Code of Conduct. We require Governors and Trustees to prioritise meetings they are asked to attend and to this end publish an annual calendar of meetings to which we aim to conform, other than for unforeseen circumstances (Appended).

Outstanding governance requires that Governors know their schools other than just from the information provided by schools' Executive Leaders. This will require governors, by appointment or invitation and with a clear purpose or agenda, to undertake these kinds of activities outside of the meeting schedule:

- To be aware of the statutory responsibilities of governors
- To visit their school whilst it is both at work and when celebrating its achievements
- To attend training and suggest training to improve governors' effectiveness and knowledge

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 4.1.2 “Governors' Handbook” 2017

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 4.8 “Governors' Handbook” 2017

- To report their observations and experiences to governor colleagues and/or senior leaders (in writing or verbally where a written submission is not yet available) to improve collective awareness
- To take an interest in a particular aspect of the school's work on behalf of its pupils and/or students.
- To take an interest in the experiences of a particular cohort of pupils/students

**Outstanding governance is a professional job undertaken voluntarily.** It requires a commitment of time and, for those governors in employment, reasonable time off (i.e. by negotiation between the employee and their employer) **is a statutory right** – although employers are under no obligation to pay governors for the time taken, which may be a stumbling block.

Good practice dictates that Governors and their immediate families may not profit personally through their association with The Trust. To this end a new and comprehensive **register of interests**<sup>4</sup> has been in place since September 2015.

The documentation supporting this is included with this document.

The structure of The Trust is appended.

Additionally included with this document are the current Constitution and Terms of Reference of

- the Board of Trustees
- the Audit Committee
- Local Governing Boards

Also appended is the Code of Conduct.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 4.8 Governors Handbook 2017

## **CLERKING within the Trust**

The DfE recognises that professional-quality clerking is critical to the effectiveness of a governing board in fulfilling its core strategic functions:

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

Professional-quality clerking is about much more than taking minutes to record the discussions and decisions of the board. It is also about providing governing boards with expert advice on governance, procedures and compliance and directly contributing to its efficient conduct. The voluntary nature of governance makes it all the more important that boards conduct their business efficiently to make the best possible use of everyone's time. Professional clerking has a vital role to play in meeting the administrative and procedural requirements of boards and enabling efficient and effective discussion and decision making.

The current Clerks to the Trust's Boards are:

### **Jahan McCready:**

- The Loxford School Trust Members' Board
- The Loxford School Trust Trustees (Directors) Board
- The Audit Committee
- The Loxford School Local Governing Board
- The Aldborough Primary Academy Local Governing Board
- The Warren Local Governing Board
- Plus Clerking any ad hoc panels and/or Pupil Discipline Panels etc. for the above schools

### **Debbie Hilliard:**

- Tabor Academy Local Governing Board

### **Natalie Humberstone:**

- Abbs Cross Academy Local Governing Board

### **The role of the clerk<sup>5</sup>**

All academy trusts and maintained schools must appoint a clerk to their governing board as set out in their articles of association or in regulations, as appropriate. These legal documents define a specific set of functions and duties for the clerk, but do not provide a full description of professional clerking which is about ensuring the efficient functioning of the board by providing:

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<sup>5</sup> Clerking Competency Framework 2017 Page 7

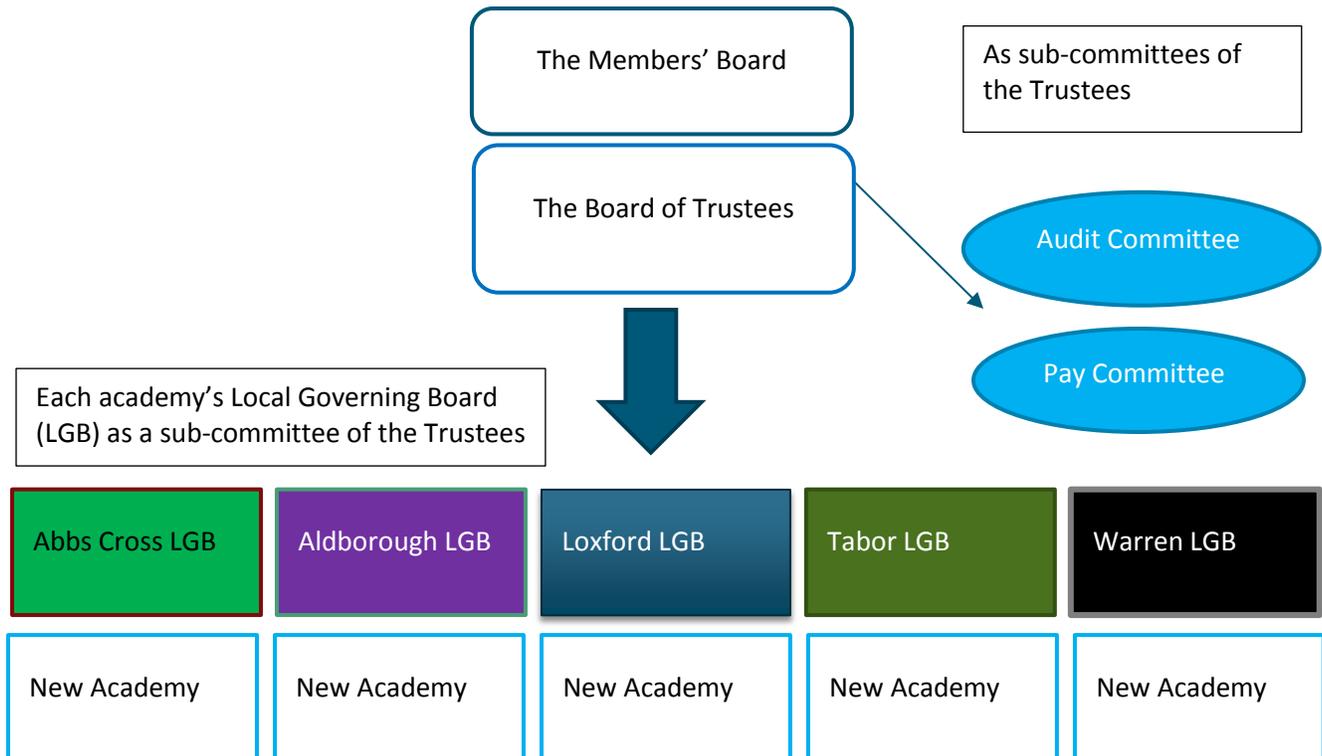
- administrative and organisational support;
- guidance to ensure that the board works in compliance with the appropriate legal and regulatory framework, and understands the potential consequences for non-compliance; and
- advice on procedural matters relating to the operation of the board.

Further details of the Competencies expected of Clerks, according to the DfE can be found in the **Clerking Competency Framework 2017 downloadable from:**

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

Copies of the Handbook for Governors 2017 and the Competency Framework for Governance are also downloadable from that link.

## The Governance Structure of the Trust



**Local Governors' Boards (LGB)** meet before the termly Trustees' Meeting and report to the Trustees by way of minutes and specific local matters to be raised.

- Local Governors' Boards receive primarily, Head teachers' reports, monitor local policies and any relevant information provided by The Trust.

**The Pay Committee** will meet at least annually at the conclusion of the Appraisal / Performance Management Cycle to review the Trust's pay policy, senior leaders and others' pay progression and, by report, make recommendations to the Trustees' Board.

The **Audit committee** meets with auditors to review Internal and External Audit Reports before the termly Trustees' Meeting

- The Audit committee receives, primarily, Audit reports and reports from the Director of Finance (CFO) who may be supported by the CEO/Chief Accounting Officer
- Specific details of Financial Management are written in the separate Finance Manual.

**The Trustees** meet at least termly to review the strategic success of the Trust through its schools.

- The Trustees receive primarily a report from the CEO, together with reports/minutes from the Audit and LGB sub-committees.
- Specific details of Financial Management are written in the separate Finance Manual.

**The Members** form the Limited Company and meet at least annually to oversee the Annual Report of the Trust's undertakings.

# Meeting Dates 2017-2018 Academic Year

MEETING DATES 2017-2018 LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST								
School Year 2017 -2018								
All Meetings Start at 6:00 pm unless otherwise stated								
Autumn Term			Spring Term			Summer Term		
September			January			May		
Monday	04/09/2017	Term Starts	Thursday	25/01/2018	Loxford LGB	Thursday	10/05/2018	Loxford LGB
October			Wednesday	31/01/2018	Aldborough LGB	Wednesday	16/05/2018	Aldborough LGB
Thursday	05/10/2017	Loxford LGB	February			Thursday	24/05/2018	Warren LGB
Wednesday	11/10/2017	Aldborough LGB	Thursday	08/02/2018	Warren LGB	June		
Thursday	19/10/2017	Warren LGB	Thursday	22/02/2018	Tabor LGB 4:00 p.m.	Thursday	07/06/2018	Tabor LGB 4:00 p.m.
November			March			Thursday	14/06/2018	Abbs Cross LGB
Thursday	02/11/2017	Tabor LGB 4:00 p.m.	Thursday	01/03/2018	Abbs Cross LGB	Thursday	21/06/2018	Audit Ctte 10:00 a.m.
Thursday	09/11/2017	Abbs Cross LGB	Thursday	08/03/2018	Audit Ctte 10:00 a.m.	July		
Thursday	16/11/2017	Audit Ctte 10:00 a.m.	Thursday	22/03/2018	Loxford Directors'	Thursday	05/07/2018	Loxford Directors'
Thursday	30/11/2017	Loxford Directors'						
December								
Thursday	14/12/2017	Loxford Members'						

Meeting Papers including Headteacher/CEO/CFO Reports to be ready and sent to the relevant members at least 7 working days before the scheduled meeting.

# Code of Conduct for School Governors

Updated: September 2017

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors and trustees for the governance to be properly carried out within The Trust, its schools and their communities.

Those involved in Governance within the Loxford School Trust (“The Trust”) may contribute to some or all of the following core and strategic functions:

## Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the schools / Trust
- Agreeing the school improvement strategies with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

## Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Executive leaders
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the Executive leaders
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to schools’ self-evaluation

## Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget/s
- Monitoring spending against the budget/s
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals we agree to the following:

## Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of governance and the role of the Executive leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust or a Local Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside any governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school/s. Our actions within schools and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the schools we will follow the procedures established by the governing board and or The Trust.

- We will actively support and challenge the Executive Leaders.

## Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor at any level involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board and agreed with the headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing Board, attendance records, category of governor and the Board responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors/trustees/members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase).

## Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors and the Clerk/s to the Boards.
- We will support the chair/s in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority, the Trust and other relevant agencies and the community.

## Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- The Chatham House Rule<sup>6</sup> will apply in all Board meetings (unless confidentiality takes precedence).

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<sup>6</sup> **The Chatham House Rule reads as follows:** When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.

## Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary, business or other relevant interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected<sup>7</sup> to the governing board.

## Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>7</sup> Currently (September 2017) this applies to parent and teacher / staff governors

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

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

Adopted by The Loxford School Trust - September 2016.

# Register of Interests for Loxford School Trust governors

UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 2017

**To be completed annually** (or sooner if circumstances change) by all governors.

For each business/relevant interest you must declare the name and nature of the business, the nature of the interest and the date the interest began:

## Personal Details

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your school/local governing Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this section if you are in paid employment, or you are self-employed.

Are you self-employed Yes/No\*

My employer is: \_\_\_\_\_

Their/ my business is: \_\_\_\_\_

My job is: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are employed as the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher at the school, and have other interests for which you personally receive remuneration please detail these interests below:

## Contracts

Is there a contract, either existing or proposed, between you or your relatives (defined on the final page) or spouse (or someone living with you as if he or she were your spouse), an organisation/ society/club of which you are a member, or your employer, and the school where you are a governor or an employee?

Yes/No – If yes please give details of each contract below:

Nature of Interest (including details of company or organisation)	Date of Start of Interest

Are you a partner or director in a company or a body corporate or do you hold substantial securities?

Yes/No\*

Nature of company or organisation	Date of Start of Interest

### Interest in securities

Do you hold any substantial securities in any company or body corporate?

Yes/No\* – If yes please give details of each contract below:

Nature of company or organisation	Date of Start of Interest

### Membership of governing boards or academy trusts

Please record the details of governorships or trusteeships you hold on other schools. For each membership please record the name of the school, the office held and the date your membership began. If you do not hold any other governorships or trusteeships please write “not applicable” below.

Nature of School/Academy	Date of Start

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**Relationships between governors and members of the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives and relationships between school staff, including consultants.**

Please declare below any relationship with a member of the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives. This includes spouse, partner, parent, parents-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, stepdaughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece

Nature of member of staff	Nature of Relationship

**Declaration**

I declare that to the best of my knowledge the foregoing is accurate, and I am aware that the above information is open to inspection. If my circumstances change, I will immediately inform the governing Board and make an appropriate declaration.

Signature ..... Date .....

Once you have completed this form please return it to the Clerk to the Trust, Mrs J McCready. **Please note that the contents of this document will be published on the Trust’s website.**

Please remember you need to declare an interest if your relative or spouse (or someone living with you as if he or she were your spouse) would be considered to have an interest in any item discussed at a meeting. The definition of a relative includes spouse, partner, parent, parents-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, stepdaughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece.)

## Board of Trustees/Directors

UPDATED: JULY 2015

# CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Board of Trustees of Loxford School Trust Ltd is the strategic Committee of the Loxford School Trust Ltd.

## Membership

The Membership of the Board of Trustees will be made up as follows:

- The Trust CEO (ex-officio)
- One Representative elected from the Local Governing Board of each Trust School according to the eligibility criteria i.e. not an employee of any Trust School
- All Members.

## Quorum

Fifty per cent of the current membership of the Board of Trustees will form a quorum to transact business

## Delegation

The Trustees delegate all strategic and financial responsibilities to the Board of Trustees

## Casual Vacancies

Casual vacancies, other than vacancies resulting from the resignation of representatives of Local Governing Boards, will be filled in accordance with reference to a skills analysis identifying expertise from which the Trust may benefit.

## Frequency of Meetings

The Board of Trustees will meet in accordance with the stated policy of the Loxford School Trust – see “The Loxford Trust Governors’ Handbook 2017” or as amended and at least once per term according to the published Trust Calendar.

## Attendance

All Trustees are urged to make attendance at the meetings of the Board of Trustees a priority.

In the absence of the Chief Executive Officer for any reason, the Director of Finance or other senior member of staff nominated by the CEO may attend on the CEO’s behalf to report to the Board of Trustees.

## Functions of the Board of Trustees

With reference to the Loxford School Trust:

- To promote the core functions of the Trust the Board of Trustees will:

1. Conduct the Trust with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement within its schools:
  - a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
  - b. Holding the Chief Executive Officer to account for the educational performance of the Trust and its schools; and
  - c. Overseeing the financial performance of the Trust and making sure its money is spent according to the Value for Money principles as stated in the Academies Financial Handbook 2017 or as amended.

#### At its first meeting of the academic year:

- To elect a Chairman and/or Vice Chairman
- To elect a Chairman of the Audit Committee (this cannot be the Chairman of the Board of Trustees)
- To complete the signing the Governors' Code of Practice where this has not happened at Local Governing Board Level
- To compile and publish on the Trust Website short profiles of all the Trust's Trustees and Governors including:
  - The Register of relevant Business and other relevant Interests of the Board of Trustees and Local Governors (details of the requirements are in the Academies Financial Handbook 2017 or as amended)
  - The names of all members, their terms of office, their roles within the governance structure, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing them.
  - Ensure all published data on the Trust website complies with current regulations
  - To review and familiarise themselves with the Trust's Strategic Development Plan and ensure it details an appropriate action plan to deal with key issues following Inspection and or in relation to developments at the Trust's Schools (dealt with in the CEO's/CFO's Report)
  - To receive all relevant Financial Reports and matters related to the Trust's Schools' Estates (dealt with in the CFO's/CEO's Report)
  - To receive reports and recommendations from the Audit Committee
  - To receive the minutes of each LGB and deal with any specific matters referred from those sub-committees.
  - To note the Staffing Position in each Trust School - in particular the Senior Leadership (dealt with in the CEO's Report)

#### At subsequent meetings during the academic year

- To complete the signing the Governors' Code of Practice (in the case of new members)
- Ensure all published data on the Trust website remains compliant with current regulations
- To review progress against the Trust's Strategic Development Plan and any relevant action plans relating to the Trust or its schools (dealt with in the CEO's Report)
- To receive all relevant Financial Reports (dealt with in the DoFO's Report)
- To receive reports and recommendations from the Audit Committee
- To receive the minutes of each LGB and deal with any specific matters referred from those sub-committees.
- To note the Staffing Position in each Trust School - in particular the Senior Leadership (dealt with in the CEO's Report)

### Whenever required

- To review resource provision, both human and financial, and report and/or make recommendation to the Loxford Trust Trustees where deemed appropriate concerning proposed or already implemented changes
- To deal with any matters referred to it by the Members of the Loxford School Trust Ltd.

### Annually

- To review the effectiveness and impact of Governance within the Trust to inform the Members' Annual Report through updating a "Skills Audit" and "Matrix" in preparation for the Trust's Annual Report.

# AUDIT COMMITTEE

UPDATED JULY 2017

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Authority

The Audit Committee is a Committee of the Board of Trustees and is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board. It is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee, external audit, internal audit or other assurance provider.

The Audit Committee is authorised to obtain outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary, normally in consultation with the Accounting Officer and/or Chair of the Trust. However, the Audit Committee may not incur expenditure in excess of £10,000 in doing so without the prior approval of the Trust.

### 2. Role

The role of the Audit Committee is to maintain an oversight of the Academy Trust's governance, risk management, internal control and value for money framework. It will report its findings annually to the Board of Trustees and the Accounting Officer as a critical element of the Academy Trust's annual reporting requirements.

The Audit Committee has no executive powers or operational responsibilities/duties.

### 3. Duties

The duties of the Audit Committee are to:

3.1 Advise the Board of Trustees and Accounting Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Academy Trust's governance, risk management, internal control and value-for-money systems and frameworks. An annual report will be produced by the Audit Committee in this regard.

3.2 Advise the Board of Trustees on the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remuneration of the external and regularity auditor.

3.3 Advise the Board of Trustees on the need for, and then, where appropriate, the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remuneration of, an internal auditor or other assurance provider to enable the Board to sign the corporate governance statement in the annual accounts.

3.4 Advise the Board of Trustees on an appropriate programme of work to be delivered by independent assurance providers (external auditors and responsible officer). This programme of work to be derived from the Audit Committee's regard of the key risks faced by the Academy Trust, the assurance framework in place and its duty to report to the Board of Trustees as detailed in 3.1.

3.5 Review the external auditor's annual planning document and approve the planned audit approach.

3.6 Receive reports (annual reports, management letters etc) from the external auditor and other bodies, for example the EFA and NAO, and consider any issues raised, the associated management response and action plans. Where deemed appropriate, reports should be referred to the Board or other committee for information and action.

3.7 Regularly monitor outstanding audit recommendations from whatever source and ensure any delays to implementation dates are reasonable.

3.8 Review the Academy Trust's fraud response plan and ensure that all allegations of fraud or irregularity are managed and investigated appropriately.

3.9 Consider any additional services delivered by the external auditor or other assurance provider and ensure appropriate independence is maintained.

3.10 Ensure appropriate cooperation and coordination of the work of the external auditor and responsible officer.

3.11 Meet with the external auditor and responsible officer, without management present, at least annually.

#### 4. Administration

4.1 The audit committee will meet at least once per term.

4.2 The Audit Committee will consist of three members of the Board of Trustees. Additionally, up to two external co-opted members may also be appointed. The Chair of the Trust or Trustees cannot be a member of the Audit Committee.

4.3 The Audit Committee will be quorate if two members are present and 50% of members are Academy Trustees' Board members.

4.4 The Accounting Officer, Finance Director and other members of the Academy Trust staff maybe invited to attend, but will have no voting rights.

4.5 Administrative support will be provided by the Clerk to the Board of Trustees.

4.6 Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of the Audit Committee (based on, but not limited to, a pre-agreed annual schedule of activity) and papers will be circulated to members and attendees at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.

4.7 Minutes of meetings will be taken and once approved in draft by the Chair of the Audit Committee, be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees.

4.8 The Audit Committee will review these terms of reference and self- assess its performance against these terms of reference on an annual basis.

# Local Governors' Boards

UPDATED JULY 2017

## CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Local Governors' Boards are sub-committees of the Board of Trustees of Loxford School Trust Ltd.

### Membership

The Membership of the Local Governors' Board will be made up as follows:

- Headteacher [Ex-Officio]
- The Trust CEO [Ex-Officio] or:
- The Director of Primary [for Primary Schools]
- One Teacher [Elected by teachers]
- One Staff Member [Elected by staff]
- Two Parents [Elected by the parents] **SEE NOTE RE: LOXFORD SCHOOL BELOW**
- 3 Co-opted Governors

Additionally – any Trust Board member is entitled to attend, without voting rights, the meetings of any LGB.

**Loxford Parent Governors** will be elected:

- from the parents of children in years R – 5, and
- from the parents of children in years 6 – 13

### Revised terms of Office

With effect from 1 September 2015 all newly **elected** governors (staff, teacher, parent) will normally serve a term of **two** years from the date of their election. (This provision is allowed for in the Statutory Regulations 2015).

### Delegation

The Local Governors' Board has delegated responsibilities only according to the policy of the Trustees of the Trust.

### Casual Vacancies

Casual vacancies will be filled in accordance with the normal recruitment procedures for members of the Local Governors' Board

### Frequency of Meetings

The Local Governors' Board will meet at least once per term according to the published Trust Calendar.

### Attendance

In compliance with the Code of Conduct, all Governors are urged to make attendance at the meetings of the Local Governing Board a priority.

In the absence of the Head teacher for any reason, the Deputy Head-teacher or other senior member of staff nominated by the Head teacher may attend on the Head's behalf to report to the Local Governors' Board.

Any members of the school's leadership team, including from time to time curriculum leaders [middle leaders], will be welcome as observers, to report to, or to make contributions to the discussions at the sub-committee meetings. They will not be members of the Local Governors' Board or have the right to vote at meetings.

## Functions of the Local Governors' Board

With reference to the School Development Plan:

- To promote the core functions of the Trust the Local Governors Board will:
  - Conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement:
  - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
  - Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
  - Note the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

At its first meeting of the academic year:

- To elect a Chairman and/or Vice Chairman and decide who will represent the Local Governing Board on the Board of Trustees of the Loxford Trust
- To assign link governors to areas deemed appropriate by the LGB
- **From January 2017 Trustees are taking overall Trust responsibility for both Safeguarding and SEND in all the Trust's Schools: this may be delegated to a Local Governor when appropriate**
- To receive any reports from or select link governors for the core subjects, safeguarding and SEND/AEN where available
- To sign the Governors' Code of Practice
- **Prior to the meeting** ensure all published data on the school website complies with current regulations
- To review and familiarise themselves with the School Development Plan and ensure it details an appropriate action plan to deal with key issues following the academy's most recent inspection.
- To review in detail pupil achievement at the end of all Key Stages in the previous academic year and to review the progress of all current pupils, including projections of their future progress and achievement and to agree school pupil progress/achievement targets (through Head teacher's Report)
- To monitor the impact statement and the strategy statement relating to Pupil Premium/Primary Sports funding (and publish on the website)
- To review benchmarking data in relation to pupil achievement including the Ofsted Dashboard data for the school (or other benchmarking data)
- To review the provision of the core subjects in the National Curriculum/Curriculum
- **To review Sex Education provision and minute its findings**
- To review teaching and other relevant plans for the academic year in light of the School Development Plan and or other action plans

At subsequent meetings during the academic year

- To review Safeguarding
- To keep the National Curriculum/Curriculum provision in the school under scrutiny
- To receive a report on pupil progress by Year Group and Key Stage

- To review curriculum enrichment including both on-site and off-site visits and experiences
- **To know the name of the Senior Leader with responsibility for Health and Safety for visits**
- **To receive and review risk assessments for school visits and curriculum areas and minute its findings**
- To receive occasional reports, written or face-to-face, from Subject leaders / ATLs
- To receive reports from link Governors
- To receive reports concerning Pupil/Parent and Staff Voice feedback or to initiate such surveys

#### Whenever required

- To review resource provision, both human and financial, and report and/or make recommendation to the Loxford Trust Trustees where deemed appropriate concerning proposed or already implemented changes
- To review, publish on the schools' website and keep up-to-date all statutory and other relevant school policies [it may be appropriate to delegate the review function to a smaller working party or an individual].
- To deal with any matters referred to it by the Trustees of the Loxford Trust.

# Model Agenda – First meeting of the Academic Year – Local Governing Boards

Governors are requested to attend a meeting of the <SCHOOL> Local Governing Board for the transaction of the business set out below, on <DATE AND TIME> at <VENUE>.

## PROCEDURE:

### 1 Membership and Attendance

List the members of the LGB, their status (i.e. Trust, parent, staff etc), the expiry of their term of office and their role on the LGB.

- a. Governors/visitors will sign the register of attendance
- b. To receive any apologies for absence.
- c. To consider whether the Governing Board consents to any member(s) being absent
- d. To note those absent without apologies
- e. To note any changes in Membership
- f. To co-opt Governors (where relevant)
- g. Governors will complete and or update their skills audit and note areas relevant for any new recruits

### 2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests/Code of Conduct

- a. Governors will complete the Register of Business Interests form and withdraw from any item causing a conflict of interest during the meeting.
- b. Governors will sign the Code of Conduct

### 3 Business of Meeting

- a. To identify and agree any items to be considered under the agenda item “Other Urgent Business” or to defer any item to the next meeting

### 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

- a. To agree the minutes of the last meeting
- b. To discuss any matters arising

### 5 Elections/Roles and responsibilities

- a. Elect a Chair and/or Vice-chair if necessary (essential)

- b. Elect a Representative to the Trust Board of Trustees (essential)
- c. Name the Governor with oversight of Safeguarding (essential)
- d. Name the Governor with oversight of SEND (essential)
- e. Name other link Governors (e.g. curriculum area/phase) etc. (desirable)

## Teaching and Achievement

### School Improvement

#### 6) School Improvement Plan/Action Plan

- a. To receive and discuss the Head teacher's report on strategic and forward planning in relation to developing the curriculum, staffing, teaching and pupil achievement (**The School Improvement Plan/Action Plan**) noting where it deals with any issues from recent Inspection or Monitoring Reports (where relevant).
- b. To have presented the planned use of Pupil Premium and Primary Sports Premium income
- c. To receive a summary of progress in implementing any specific action plans for school improvement (where relevant).
- d. Current staff list, their status and their responsibilities.

#### 7) Performance Indicators:

- a. Information from any new, current Inspection or Monitoring reports
- b. Achievement of pupils by Key Stage: EYFS – KS5 (most recent results of National Tests/Examinations)
- c. Ofsted Dashboard benchmarking data (where available and current: "G" pages)
- d. Destination data for leavers (University/College entrants, Apprenticeships, NEETS, other); (grammar school entrants from Y6)
- e. To receive the current impact report on the use of Pupil Premium/Primary Sports Premium
- f. To receive any targets for pupil attainment and to note performance against any previous targets
- g. To receive and discuss the Head teacher's report and data on the most recent/current assessments of the specific relevant groups from the following list:

NOTE: Clearly not all of these will be relevant to individual schools, or at all, – but these groups are the focus for the current Ofsted Inspection Schedule (September 2015) and the issues related to any relevant groups for their school should be identified in the Head teachers' Reports:

- a. disabled children and learners and those who have special educational needs
- b. children and learners in specialist provision
- c. boys/men
- d. girls/women

- e. the highest and lowest attaining children and learners
- f. children and learners for whom English is an additional language
- g. children and learners from minority ethnic groups
- h. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and learners
- i. lesbian, gay and bisexual children and learners
- j. transgender children and learners
- k. young carers
- l. children and learners attending alternative provision (still on the school role)
- m. children and learners with medical conditions
- n. disadvantaged children and learners
- o. children looked after and care leavers
- p. older learners
- q. children and learners of different religions and beliefs
- r. ex-offenders
- s. teenage mothers
- t. other vulnerable groups.

The Report *may* also include:

- a. Progress and attainment of pupils by year group or department noting any specific challenges or interventions (e.g. particular groups of children receiving intervention, “narrowing the gap” progress, etc.) or any particular challenges related to adding value to previous attainment.
- b. Any other pupil progress-related information – including any changes in the school’s demographic which may impact on learning or attainment outcomes.

The Report **will** also include:

- a. **TEACHING STANDARDS:** The Head teacher’s assessment of current Teaching Standards by phase/department/Key Stage and any matters related to training for improvement or consolidation – (this latter may be dealt with under the School Improvement Plan).
- b. **SAFEGUARDING:** Confirmation from the Head teacher concerning:
  - a. The names of Senior Managers with specific responsibilities
  - b. The date and nature of the most recent training
  - c. That the Single Central Register is up to date and any related issues
  - d. Any confidential issues related specifically to Safeguarding (if necessary deferred to the end of the meeting)
- c. **CURRICULUM:** Information on planned or implemented changes or developments to the school’s curriculum
- d. **EXTENDED CURRICULUM:** Information on the provision under the extended curriculum.
- e. **STANDARD ITEMS:**
  - a. Security and thefts: resulting in loss or damage of resources, personal property or to buildings
  - b. Serious accidents to pupils and or staff: resulting in serious injury or time lost from school/work plus any remediation needed (e.g. to faulty or damaged equipment or building repairs)
  - c. Fire drills: date and time taken to evacuate the building plus any urgent health and safety implications noted
  - d. Exclusions: Number of internal/external and permanent exclusions and nature of offences
  - e. Formal Complaints: Raised internally or by parents/others

- f. **Any other matters** the Head teacher wishes the LGB to note – “Good News”, sports and other successes, positive press, etc.
- 8) Finance Information
- a. To receive and note any relevant Finance Reports insofar as they impact upon the school
- 9) Trust Matters
- a. To receive and note any relevant information from Loxford School Trust insofar as it impacts upon the school (e.g. new key leavers/appointments).
  - b. To list any items to be referred to the Trust Trustees
- 10) Governor involvement
- a. To note any Chair’s action
  - b. To receive reports from any Governors who have visited the school since the previous meeting
  - c. To receive reports from specific link governors on their areas/involvement
  - d. To note future opportunities for Governor visits (book-looks, learning walks, etc.) and receive notice of any fixed dates that may be relevant (concerts, exhibitions, INSET, etc)
- 11) Policies
- a. To deal with any matters relating to any policies that may be referred by the Head teacher
  - b. To note specifically the policies that are published on the school’s/Trust’s websites and receive assurance that they are currently relevant
  - c. To review specifically and minute the school’s policy on Sex Education (statutory)
  - d. To review the School’s Admissions Policy
- 12) Other Urgent Business
- a. To deal with any matters agreed under Item 3 of the Agenda
- 13) Confidential Items
- a. To deal with any matters deemed confidential (visitors or staff governors may be asked to withdraw to avoid a conflict of interest)
- 14) Date, time and place of the next meeting
- a. To note the published calendar of meetings for the academic year
  - b. To note the date of the next meeting

# SKILLS AUDIT 2017

## Trustee of a multi-academy trust – Knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours

Level of knowledge  
or skills/behaviour:  
rate on scale of

No → → → Yes

**1 2 3 4 5**

### 1. Strategic leadership

I am committed to improving education and welfare for all pupils.					
I understand current national education policy and the local education context.					
I have experience of charity law and governance.					
I have experience of trusteeship or management of a complex organisation with multiple sites/subsidiaries.					
I have experience of chairing a board/governing board or committee.					
I am committed to the organisation's vision and ethos.					
I have experience of strategic planning and applying this to set and preserve the culture of the organisation.					
I have experience of working with executive leaders to agree and monitor operational plans.					
I am able to question and challenge, working as part of a team to identify viable options through collective decision making.					
I am able to work in a professional manner, avoiding conflicts, acting with transparency and integrity.					
I am confident I can identify when to seek independent/professional advice.					
I have experience of stakeholder management and engagement including communicating with and taking account of the views of parents and pupils.					
I have experience of promoting community cohesion.					
I understand school sector risk management including conflicts of interest/loyalty.					
I am proficient in prioritising, assessing and mitigating risk.					
I have experience of agreeing organisation expansion plans and conducting due diligence on other organisations prior to signing a legally binding contract.					

### 2. Accountability

I understand the importance of collecting high quality data and have expertise using data to interpret/evaluate performance and identify trends to target improvement.					
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I have experience of curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment.					
I have experience of working with executive leaders to establish expectations for improvement and outcomes.					
I have experience of agreeing the range and format of information and data needed in order to hold leaders to account.					
I have experience of providing challenge to leaders on strategies for monitoring and improving behaviour and safety.					
I understand the board's duties in relation to safeguarding including Prevent.					
I have an understanding of special education needs and disabilities (SEND).					
I have financial management expertise including funding allocation/budget monitoring, and financial solvency. I am able to contribute to financial self-evaluation and efficiency drives.					
I have experience of basing funding decisions on organisational priorities and the ability to interpret financial data and question financial performance against strategic priorities.					
I have experience ensuring that organisational financial obligations are met and adequate financial controls are in place, including submission of annual returns and accounts.					
I have business development experience/expertise.					
I have experience of procurement/purchasing.					
I have experience of property and estate-management.					
I have experience of HR policy and processes including employment legislation, executive recruitment, performance management and pay.					
I have experience of school sector HR policy and processes.					
I have experience of change management (overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure).					
I have experience of marketing, media and PR.					
I have experience of preparing for and responding to external oversight.					
I have experience of inspection and oversight in the school sector.					
<b>3. People</b>					
I am willing to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties of and responsibilities of a trustee including duties of compliance, care and prudence.					
I'm a strong communicator and experienced in building strong collaborative relationships.					

I am able to discuss sensitive issues with experience of conflict resolution and influencing consensus.					
I am able to demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviour and values, honesty, independence of thought and sound judgement.					
I am committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.					
I am willing to reflect, listen and learn from a diversity of views, to receive and provide feedback and accept impartial advice.					
<b>4. Structures</b>					
I am familiar with the strategic nature of the board's functions and how this differs from and works with others including executive leaders and academy or regional committees.					
I have experience of designing/reviewing/adapting governance structures appropriate to the size and complexity of the organisation, reflecting the diversity of stakeholders.					
<b>5. Compliance</b>					
I have you have experience of complying with legal, regulatory and financial frameworks and statutory guidance.					
I understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.					
Governing boards are responsible for ensuring schools comply with a whole range of legal responsibilities. I have experience ensuring legal compliance in this way and a commitment to understanding the full range of legal responsibilities.					
I understand the importance of adhering to organisation policies e.g. on parental complaints or staff discipline issues.					
I am able to speak up when concerned about non-compliance.					
<b>6. Evaluation</b>					
I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses and committed to personal development.					
I have experience evaluating board decisions and am willing to contribute to board self-review.					

### Existing MAT trustees only

What contribution do you feel you have made to the trust board over the past year?

Please give brief details of courses you have undertaken in the past year - include trustee training, work based training/development and/or any other development/training activities.

Are there any additional areas of the governing board's responsibilities to which you would like to contribute in the future?