



## Terms of Reference - Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is appointed by the Members and is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Trust and is directly accountable for the educational standards and financial management of the Trust and its Academies. In particular:

- Defining and communicating a Vision for the Trust and its Academies/Settings
- Setting and monitoring of standards for achievement of the Vision of the Trust
- Financial management in accordance with the Master Funding Agreement through the setting of a budget for each academy and monitoring its financial performance
- Ensuring the effective safeguarding of all those involved with the Trust.
- Management of the centralised services provided by the Trust.

The Board of Trustees is constituted as per the Articles of Association for Life Academies Trust and will meet at least 3 times per year. The Trust CEO will be a full member of the board of Trustees.

### Chair of Trustees

The Trust Board shall appoint an individual from among their number to act as Chair. The main role of the Chair is to chair meetings of the Trust Board. He or she also provides leadership to the Trustees and acts as the main point of contact between the Trustees and the Leadership Group.

Apart from any special responsibilities or powers given to the Chair in the Articles of Association (e.g. the right to chair meetings of the Trust Board and to have a second or casting vote in any case of an equality of votes at a meeting of the Trust Board), the Chair has no special powers or rights over any other Trustee. If the Chair is to carry out certain specific functions (for example, the power to approve an overspend in a certain area of the budget or the CEO's appraisal) then this must be expressly delegated to him by the Trust Board.

### Meetings of Trustees

There will be a minimum of three meetings of the Trustees each academic year. Meetings of the Trustees shall be convened and conducted as provided by the Articles.

In determining the agenda for Trust Board meetings and Committee meetings, the Trustees will have regard to the requirement on them to:

- Ensure the effective academic performance and the overall standard of education provided by the Trust and the schools within it.
- Ensure the effective safeguarding of all children, young people and adults associated with the Trust.
- Ensure good financial management and effective internal controls;
  - Complying with the Funding Agreement and the current version of the Academies Financial Handbook (or successor documents);
  - Receiving and consider information on financial performance at least three times a year; and
  - Taking appropriate action to ensure ongoing viability against agreed budgets.

In consultation with the Chair, the Clerk to the Trust Board shall prepare an annual plan for the meetings of the Trustees.

The Trustees are responsible for the governance and supervision of the Academy Trust and its committees (including Academy Governance Committees). They have a number of duties and responsibilities relating to the governance of the Academy Trust and its finances. In summary, the Trustees are responsible for:

- Establishing the vision, mission and values for the Academy Trust;
- Carrying on the Academy Trust in accordance with the objects of the Academy Trust as set out in the Articles of Association and safeguarding the assets of the Academy Trust;
- Designing strategy and structure for the operation of the Academy Trust;
- the delegation of the running of the Academies and the direction of the education, pastoral care, financial and other policies of the Academies/Settings to the Leadership Group;
- Ensuring the sound management and administration of the Academy Trust by the Leadership Group, and ensuring that the Leadership Group is equipped with the relevant skills and guidance;
- Financial controls and the financial management of the Academy Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Academies Financial Handbook, which sets out in detail provisions for the financial management of the Academy Trust;
- Setting standards of conduct and values, monitoring performance and the achievement of objectives, and ensuring that plans for improvement are acted upon;
- Risk management, that is identifying, quantifying and devising systems to minimise the major risks affecting the Academy Trust; and
- Ensuring the Academy Trust and its Academies/Settings are conducted in compliance with the data protection and general law.

### Delegation of powers of Trustees

Trusteeship is a personal office of trust and responsibility and this cannot be transferred to another individual. However, in order to ensure the proper management of its Academies/Settings, the Trustees are able to delegate specific tasks to assist them in carrying out their duties and obligations.

It is for the Trust Board to determine what decisions it will take for itself, what will be delegated to committees, working groups or individual Trustees (e.g. the Chair) and what will be delegated to the Leadership Group. The Trustees must also consider when and from whom they should take professional advice.

In determining whether delegation is appropriate, the Trustees will have regard to the following principles:

- Non-executive powers must be exercised by the Trustees personally and may not be delegated;
- Executive powers should be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and Trustee of Finance, except when it is impracticable to do so, who may authorise further delegation.
- Every act of delegation is only a delegation of powers and does not relieve the Trustees of responsibility.

The process of delegation for LAT is outlined in the Scheme of Delegation and includes delegation to a number of functionaries. The Trust Board may (to replace 'will') routinely delegate to 2 executive committees to fulfil its responsibilities:

**Finance and Audit committee** –overall responsibility for financial management and setting of budgets, personnel management and recruitment of staff and premises management including Health and Safety and safeguarding.

**Standards, Performance and Pay committee** – responsibility for setting standards and monitoring performance (pupil and staff) across the Trust: intervening where necessary and appropriate to do so. Ensuring the regular and special needs of all children are met to deliver the Trust aims for every child.

Both committees shall meet as often as required and at least 3 times per year.

In addition, the Board may choose to delegate to

- The Academy Governance Committees;
- Any other committee so deemed necessary by the Board
- The CEO
- The Leadership Group (which in turn may delegate to further individuals).
- Any individual Trustee.