

NB. 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association.

Governance of the Trust

The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy to the CEO, who is also the Accounting Officer. The Board of Trustees holds the CEO to account for the performance of the Trust, including the performance of the Academies within the Trust. The CEO, in turn, holds the Head Teachers of the Academies to account through line management. The CEO is supported by a Trust Leadership Team, consisting of a Deputy CEO, Chief Finance Officer who may attend Trustees meetings as non-voting contributors. Other non-voting attendees may be requested by the Trustees.

Some responsibilities for the performance of each academy are delegated to the Local Governing Body. These responsibilities include setting the school budget for approval, monitoring whether the school is working within the agreed policies, whether standards and statutory responsibilities are being met and if the money is being well spent.

The CEO reports to the Board of Trustees on the performance of the Trust including the performance of the Trust's schools, which is also supplemented by monitoring reports from the Trust Central Team.

The Key Elements of the Governance Structure are:

The Members of the Trust Board (5 Members)

The Members have ultimate control over the Academy Trust, with the ability to appoint some of the Trustees and the right to amend the Trust's Articles of Association. The Members can control changes in the constitution (subject to DfE approval) and other fundamental decisions relating to the academy trust. Members also have the right to remove a Trustee by ordinary resolution (a vote passed by a simple majority of Members). The Members will hold the Board of Trustees to account by receiving the minutes of Board of Trustee meetings, key finance and Trust performance monitoring documents, especially if decisions violate the Articles of Association and agreed objectives of the Trust.

The role of a Member is likely to therefore be a largely strategic one with the responsibility to guard and support the vision. Perhaps the distinction between a Member and Trustee is best illustrated by an example; whilst the annual audited accounts will be presented to the Members it is the Board of Trustees and the Chair of Trustees who approve, sign them and send them to Companies House.

There is one member with approval from the Diocese of Exeter, who represents the voice of the Diocese and church education.

For Member bios, please refer to our Our Trust tab.

The Board of Trustees (9 Trustees)

The Trustees are responsible for the same three core governance functions performed by the governing body in a maintained school:

- setting the direction,

- holding the CEO to account
- ensuring financial probity.

As charity Trustees, they must also ensure that they are complying with charity law requirements. Academy trusts are charitable companies and the Trustees are company trustees and must comply with company law requirements. This may sound daunting, but, in reality, the duties are largely the same as those of a governor of a maintained school, such as regularly attending meetings, managing conflicts of interest, seeking advice from the academy's leadership team and ensuring the academy has appropriate procedures in place for reporting financial information and school performance. The LGB will play an active part in holding the Head Teacher and other senior leaders to account as well as supporting the development of the academy.

The model articles state that the Chair of the Board of Trustees will also be a Member, thereby ensuring a link between the two layers. Other than the Chair, Trustees cannot also serve as Members, the most effective governance models recognise that the Members are responsible for holding the Trustees to account. Some separation between those serving as Trustees and those serving as members is, therefore, strongly recommended for achieving robust accountability.

There are two Trustees on the Board with approval from the Diocese of Exeter and who represent the voice of the Church of England's education values.

For Trustee bios, please refer to our Our Trust tab.

Board of Trustee Committees

The Board of Trustees meets at least termly and often half termly. The Board will cover an education agenda as well as a resources and policy brief. There will be an Audit, Personnel & Remuneration Committee which reports to the Board of Trustees. This will be made up of 3 Trustees. The CEO (Accounting Officer) and or CFO will advise this committee (non-voting for the purposes of recommendations to the full Board of Trustees and neither the CFO nor CEO will participate in discussions about setting their own salaries). There will be no other sub-committees of the Board of Trustees, but working parties which must report directly to the full Board can be established with a clear purpose and function.

Chairs of Local Governing Bodies Group

This group enables the Chairs of Local Governing Bodies or the LGB's elected representative, the CEO and a nominated Trustee to meet at least once a term to discuss the strategic direction of the Trust, enable the Chairs for all schools to meet and discuss issues across schools and report termly up to the Board and to the Local Governing Bodies. It is also used as a platform for the Trust/School leaders group to consult on proposals and for Chairs to make recommendations and raise issues or concerns. The group does not have any decision making powers under the Scheme of Delegation, however meeting minutes go to the Board of Trustees and the LGB for review. One elected Chair of Governors or the LGB's representative from the group chairs the meeting. The role is re-elected annually from all Chairs of LGB's or their representative by a simple resolution on a majority vote.

The Chairs of Local Governing Bodies are:

Sue Lewry: Eden Park Academy

Seth Conway: Landkey Community Primary Academy

Kim Baker: The Park Community School

Dave Cresswell: Newport Community School Primary Academy

Matt Anderson: Sticklepath Community Primary Academy

Helen Smith: North Molton Primary School

Annette Burgess: Fremington Primary School

Local Governing Body Committee

The Local Governing Body is a Committee of the Board of Trustees and has delegated decision making powers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. Sub Committees or a working party can be used where a Governing body deems it necessary to support workload, but these bodies have no decision making powers. The Local Governing Body is held to account for the performance of the school by the Board of Trustees. The Local Governing body will have the opportunity to scrutinise Trust spending and will be consulted in setting the annual Trust finance contribution.

The structure is for each school to have a Local Governing Body Committee which meets at least every half term. Meeting minutes go to the relevant Board of Trustees Committee for review and response.

For details of the members of each school's Local Governing Body, please refer to individual school websites.

