Terms of Reference
Local Governing Bodies

Document	Terms of Reference
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Terms of Reference – LGB

1.0 Purpose

1.1. In the context of a multi-school trust, the performance of every individual school is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Board discharges this responsibility, primarily, through the function of the Executive Leadership Group (ELG) of the Trust, who themselves are responsible (to the Board) for the performance of the school leadership.

1.2. This is reinforced by the work of the Local Governing Bodies (LGB), which is a forum with a brief to review and challenge the performance at the working level of each school, independently of Trust management.

1.3. The LGBs carry out their functions in relation to their respective school on behalf of the Trust Board and in accordance with policies determined by the Trust Board. The act of delegation from the Trust Board to the LGBs is a delegation of powers and duties, not a delegation or shedding of responsibilities. The core remit of this tier of governance relates to;

- Safeguarding
- Self-evaluation and school improvement (leadership and management; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; quality of education)
- Pupil progress and outcomes
- SEN and other vulnerable groups
- Pupil Premium
- Attendance
- Staff and pupil wellbeing
- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Risk at school level
- Day to day scrutiny of financial management operations
- To form panels as required, including, but not limited to; admissions, complaints and exclusions

1.4. The role of an LGB is an important one. It is to provide focused, authentic governance for the school at a local level, which does not duplicate the role of the Directors. The LGB monitors the school's key performance indicators and acts as a critical friend to the Headteacher and the school's senior leadership team, providing support and challenge where appropriate. The role of the LGB is to:

- Carry the Trust's mission, vision, core values, policies and priorities forward.
- Provide independent challenge to the school leadership, primarily with respect to pupil performance, the quality of the school experience and execution of the school improvement plan.
- The independent challenge of school leadership is provided by non-staff members of the LGB, primarily through their critical-friend review and challenge of performance data presented by the Headteacher.
- The non-staff members report to the Trust Board in an advisory capacity on pupil performance, the quality of the school experience and the execution of the school improvement plan.
- Formally feedback to the Trust Board, independently of management, on standards of leadership and delivery of the outcomes targeted by the Trust in its Strategic Plan and the school in its Improvement Plan, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement and risks observed at the working level in the schools.

- Work in partnership with the Trust and school leadership to ensure an active, high-quality effective programme of stakeholder and community engagement is delivered. In this respect, there is no distinction in the roles of members of the LGB who are Trust employees and non-employees. The LGB, under the leadership of the Chair, is intended to work as a collective to ensure effective community engagement.

1.5. If there is any discrepancy between these Terms of Reference and the Trust's Articles or its Scheme of Delegation, the Articles and Scheme of Delegation shall take precedence over these Terms of Reference.

2.0 Composition of Local Governing Bodies

2.1. Since the LGBs are committees of the Trust Board, all appointments shall be made by the Trust Board upon the recommendation of the LGB Chair and headteacher:

The total membership shall be not less than 5 but up to 11, comprising at least two parent Governors.

The LGB may continue to act notwithstanding a temporary vacancy in its composition.

2.2 Establishing LGBs with a diverse range of suitably capable people is a priority. The role of the Chair of each LGB will be to take the lead in working with the Trust Board and Trust Leaders to recruit and maintain a team of people with an appropriate blend of skills and experience to serve the needs of the school / schools being overseen by the LGB.

2.3 Each Governor on the LGB shall be formally appointed by recommendation from the headteacher and LGB Chair to the Trust Board.

2.4 Any Governor shall hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of their appointment but the length of their term of office shall not exceed four years.

2.5 Subject to remaining eligible to be a Governor of the LGB they may be re-appointed for consecutive periods.

3.0 Appointment of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk to the LGB

3.1. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the LGB shall be appointed at the first meeting of each academic year by election within the committee.

3.2 The Clerk to the LGB will be appointed by the committee, with guidance from the Headteacher.

4.0 Responsibilities of the LGB

4.1. Each LGB holds responsibility for a school within the Trust.

4.2. In order to discharge its role, the LGB will primarily rely on a process of review of performance information and reports, observation and dialogue with the school leadership in which they question, challenge and support the leadership to the point where they are able to provide an informed view to the Trust Board of their view of performance of the school and its leadership.

4.3. The independent challenge to the school leadership is provided by non-school based members of the LGB through their review and challenge of performance data presented by the Headteacher and school based members of the LGB (and senior leaders).

4.4. The LGB will be empowered by the Trust Board to make any reasonable information requests necessary for them to fulfil their role.

4.5. The Chair of the LGB is invited to attend review meetings between the Trust leaders and Headteacher so that the formal mechanism of school scrutiny and support is open, transparent and enables a member of the local community to be part of the process.

4.6. Each LGB will be empowered to pursue whatever line of enquiry it sees fit in order to assess the effectiveness of the school in the key focus areas described in the following sub-sections.

4.7. The Chair of each LGB will communicate with the Trust Board on the effectiveness of the operation of the school/ schools.

Pupil Performance

4.8 The LGB will monitor and challenge how well all pupils are doing, as well as looking at significant and vulnerable groups. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Pupils' attainment (including comparisons to targets);
- Pupils' progress (including comparisons to targets);
- Pupils' behaviour;
- Pupils' attendance (including comparisons to targets);
- The extent to which pupils feel safe;
- The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and the wider community;
- The quality of teaching and learning, and the extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of pupils;
- The effectiveness with which the school promotes inclusive practice.
- Any other areas which are pertinent to school improvement.

Note: Areas of focus should incorporate any changes to accountability measures and external scrutiny.

4.9 Headteachers will report to the LGB, sharing the same information with the CEO. The CEO will use this collated information across the trust to provide a synopsis of school performance for the Trust Board.

4.8 In order to support this aspect of their work, all Governors of the LGB will receive training / guidance from the Trust on the following areas:

- School improvement planning.
- School self-evaluation framework.
- Safeguarding
- Ofsted Common Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook, with particular regard to the governance and the effectiveness of leadership and management. This will include pre-inspection training for all LGBs.

Ofsted Monitoring

4.9. In schools which are subject to Section 8 Ofsted monitoring visits, the Trust Board recommend that a small subgroup of the LGB is created that will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of

the Post-Ofsted action plan with the Headteacher and leadership. These Governors would then be required to meet with Ofsted inspectors during any subsequent Section 8 or Section 5 Ofsted visits.

4.10. A Member of the Trust Board or CEO would also attend the meeting with Ofsted.

Headteacher Performance Management

4.11. Chairs of LGB's are directly involved in the formal performance management of the Headteacher. Each Headteacher is line managed by the Trust CEO and respective Chair of LGB.

Linked Governors

4.12. The LGB will appoint these annually at the first meeting of the academic year. These Governors will be given a named employee of the school with whom they can liaise to develop their knowledge and expertise in order to monitor the school's activity and compliance in these areas. They will report updates regularly to the committee, as required within the annual meeting schedule.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

4.13. The LGB is responsible for promoting good links, communication and understanding between the Trust, school leadership, stakeholders and the local community. A key aspect of the LGB is to enable local people to get involved in the life of the school and its standing in the community e.g. inputting into communications about the school, making links with local businesses, attending celebration events.

4.14. The LGB has five elements with regard to community and stakeholder engagement:

- Promote the work and vision of the school and the Trust within the local community.
- Make sure pupils maximise local opportunities by finding ways to keep the school at the heart of the community and acting as a key link between the two.
- Work with the school's leadership to consider the individuality and uniqueness of the school's local community and how this can support driving improvements within the school.
- Act as an ambassador for the school in the local community.
- Ensure that the school's leadership is aware and able to respond to local context and issues.

Celebration

4.19 To help to make sure that celebration of staff, pupils and parents remains a priority for each school, and to find the best way to do this.

Communication

4.20 To work with pupils, staff and parents/carers to make sure that the school effectively communicates to all stakeholders, so that everyone feels part of school life and has the opportunity to access information and events.

4.21 For example, the committee will monitor and provide regular input into communications with stakeholders (eg staff and parent / carer newsletters) to ensure that stakeholders are involved in, and kept informed about, school and Trust plans and developments.

Finance

4.22 The LGB should receive financial reports which confirm that the school's budget position remains secure and manageable.

4.23 For schools in financial difficulty, the LGB should support the Trust in ensuring the school's recovery plan is on track.

Pupil Behaviour Management

4.24. Under relevant DfE guidance, convene a panel of the LGB when:

- A pupil has received over 15 days' exclusion in one term.
- Recommendation of permanent exclusion is made by the Headteacher for a one-off incident, or through the School/Trust's behaviour policy.
- Undertake a behaviour panel in line with the above guidance and the Trust's Behaviour Policy.

Risk Management

4.25. Receive and review the risk register for the school.

4.26. Monitor school-based risks against the risk management framework escalating to Directors where appropriate.

Effectiveness Review

4.27. The LGB will be required to complete an effectiveness review from time to time (particularly when governance roles change). This will provide an opportunity for the Chair to consider the effectiveness of the LGB and any key skills requirement which can support with recruitment to any vacant Governor positions.

5.0 Meetings of the LGB

5.1. The LGB shall meet formally a minimum of four times per year and shall hold such other meetings as may be necessary.

5.2. All meetings shall be convened by the Clerk to the LGB, who shall send to the Governors written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda at least seven clear days in advance of the meeting.

5.3. A special meeting of the LGB shall be called by the Clerk whenever requested by the Chair or at the request in writing by any three Governors. Where there are matters demanding urgent consideration, the Chair or, in his absence, the Vice-Chair may waive the need for seven days' notice of the meeting and substitute such notice as he/she thinks fit.

5.4. The convening of a meeting and the proceedings conducted shall not be invalidated by reason of any individual not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda.

5.5. An LGB can decide whether it requires one or more committees to manage business outside of the full LGB meetings.

6.0 Quorum for LGB Meetings

6.1. Meetings of the LGB shall be quorate if there is one third or three (whichever is larger) LGB Governors (including at least one non-executive member) are present.

6.2. If the number of Governors assembled for a meeting of the LGB does not constitute a quorum, the meeting shall not be held. If in the course of a meeting of the LGB the number of Governors present ceases to constitute a quorum, the meeting shall be terminated forthwith.

6.3. If for lack of a quorum a meeting cannot be held or, as the case may be, cannot continue, the Chair shall, if he/she thinks fit, determine the time and date at which a further meeting shall be held and shall direct the Clerk to convene the meeting accordingly.

7.0 Proceedings for LGB Meetings

7.1. Every question / recommendation to be decided at a meeting of the LGB shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Governors present and voting on the question. Every Governor shall have one vote.

Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

7.2. A Governor may not vote by proxy.

7.3. No resolution of the Governors may be rescinded or varied at a subsequent meeting unless consideration of the rescission or variation is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.

8.0 Minutes and Publication

8.1. At every meeting of the LGB the minutes of the last meeting shall be taken as the first agenda item after any apologies, except in cases where the Governors present decide otherwise, and, if agreed to be accurate, shall be signed as a true record.

8.2 The clerks to the LGB shall ensure that a copy of the agenda and approved minutes of each meeting are made available for publication as soon as practical after each meeting.

9.0 Resignation and Removal of LGB Governors

9.1. A Governor may at any time resign his office by giving notice in writing to the Clerk to the LGB.

9.2. A Governor shall cease to hold office if he/she is removed by the person or persons who appointed him/her (i.e. the Board of Directors).

9.3 The Board of Directors may terminate the appointment of any Governor whose presence or conduct is deemed by the Directors not to be in the best interests of the Trust or the school. This will usually be on the recommendation of (or at least in consultation with) the school headteacher.

9.4. Any staff member shall automatically cease to hold office if she or he ceases to be employed at the Trust.

9.5. The Directors may terminate the appointment of any Governor who has failed to attend an LGB meeting for 6 months or more. This will usually be on the recommendation of (or at least in consultation with) the school headteacher.

10.0 Governors of the LGB

10.1. The Governors are not, and nothing within this document is intended to make them, charity Directors within the terms of section 97(1) of the Charities Act 1993.

10.2. Each Governor shall act in the best interests of the Trust and school/schools at all times.

10.3. The Governors must keep confidential all information of a confidential nature obtained by them relating to the school and the Trust.

10.4. The Directors reserve the right to withdraw delegated powers from the LGB and disband it at any time.

10.5. On his or her appointment, each Governor shall be required to signify that he/she is familiar and agrees to comply with:

- the Articles of Association.
- the Funding Agreements.
- the Scheme of Delegation.
- these Terms of Reference.

10.6 Each Governor shall also be required to carry out training to ensure their skills and knowledge are up to date.

10.7 Each Governor shall also be required to take part in regular self-review and is accountable for meeting his or her own training and development needs. It is a Governor's responsibility to consider if, and raise any concerns where, he/she or she feels that appropriate training and development is not being provided.

11.0 Conflicts of Interest

11.1. The income and property of the school must be applied solely towards the provision of the Objects as detailed in the Articles. The restrictions which apply to the Directors with regard to having a personal financial interest shall also apply to the Governors.

11.2. The procedure detailed at Article 6 of the Articles shall apply to the LGB always provided that, in the case of a personal financial interest for a Governor who is not also a Director, it will still require the Directors to authorise the benefit.

11.3. All Governors shall complete a declaration of interests' form on joining the LGB and at the start of each academic year.

11.4. Any Governor who has any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest) which conflicts or may conflict with his/her duties as a Governor shall disclose that fact to the Governors as soon as he/she becomes aware of it and notify the Chair at the start of any meeting where that conflict relates to an agenda item. A Governor must absent him/herself from any discussions of the LGB in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his/her duty to act solely in the interests of the school and any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest).

12.0 Amendment of Terms of Reference

12.1. This document shall be subject to review at least once every twelve months.

12.2. This document may be modified or replaced by the Directors.