



2024-2025

Governance Handbook for Local Academy Boards



Welcome and thank you for becoming a Governor for Enhance Academy Trust

Thank you for choosing to dedicate your time to the Governance of your Local Academy at Enhance Academy Trust. This guide contains some important and useful information to support you in your role as a new Governor.

Enhance Academy Trust

Enhance Academy Trust was established in January 2012 to act as sponsor for the Church of England, and other schools that are required or elect to become an academy. The Trust works closely with each of its academies, and a number of similar minded partners, with one fundamental objective - delivering improved educational outcomes for every pupil at each of the Trust's Academies.

Welcome from the CEO

It is my pleasure to be the Chief Executive Officer of Enhance Academy Trust.

*As a Trust, we are passionate about making a difference to the lives of children; children have **one chance**, and **we** are that chance. We strive for exceptional educational provision in all of our academies. We want our academies to be the best they can be and for each child to discover the skills, abilities, talents and interests that lie within them. To do this, our academies need highly skilled and dedicated people who are fully committed to improving the life chances of the children in their care. Every member of our staff has an important and valuable role to play in achieving this. Only the best will be good enough.*

We fully recognise the importance of academies retaining and promoting their distinctive nature and endorse earned autonomy across the Trust. Every academy has its own context and challenges. This is why we encourage academies to operate in a way that preserves their individual identity and to respond to the specific needs of their children and community. At the same time, we are a family of academies who are prepared to truly collaborate. The power of partnership, along with strands of alignment and high expectations, will enable us to continue to ensure that all children receive the high-quality education that they rightly deserve. Our work together will be underpinned by Christian values.

I want to ensure you that there will be opportunities for all staff and governors to work in partnership and share the best practice that is evident across our Trust. The combination of autonomy and collaboration, consistency in elements of our work and professional support and challenge will ensure that Enhance Academy Trust continues to be successful in meeting its aims. My ultimate goal is for all academies to be thriving communities with strong educational outcomes, outstanding leadership at all levels, a rich vibrant curriculum and highly effective provision; places where children and staff can flourish.

If you would like to know more about our vision, or ways of working, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mark Randall

Chief Executive Officer

About Our Trust



- Our Trust was set up by the Wakefield Diocese to support church and community schools in challenging circumstances and to work with them to deliver rapid improvements.
- We are now part of a wider Diocesan collection of Academies and MATs working to improve outcomes for our pupils. We support thirteen primary academies within the Trust and one post 16 specialist performing arts free school.
- We can, and do, support both Church and Community schools.
- We are a Christian organisation within the CE Diocese of Leeds.
- We are committed to providing high quality education for all our pupils.
- We are committed to providing our staff with a rewarding and progressive career.
- We are successful – we started with six schools in special measures or equivalent, we now have no schools in special measures.
- Our Trust operates in a Hub model, we have a Wakefield and Kirklees hub.
- All our academies are treated as equal partners within the Trust.

Our Vision



Enhance Academy Trust aims to deliver improved educational outcomes and learning skills to enable our young people to live well in the world around them. We also aim to allow our academy leaders and staff to develop the individual character of our academies so they can best serve their local communities.

Our vision will be developed and delivered through the following four themes:

Our Church

recognising through faith, and the Church of England, how we can give a better start to our pupils through the development of academic rigour and through the development of well-rounded personalities.



Our pupils

recognising them as individuals and preparing them to enjoy learning; to enjoy achieving; and to live life well.

Our staff

recognising their importance and value and to support their development allowing them to flourish.



Our communities

recognising and respecting the individuality of the communities we serve and encouraging our academies to work with each community.

Governance Structure

Members

Canon Peter Townley, Canon Philip Hobday, John Donald, Simone Bennett

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Kathy Smith (Chair)
Chris Schofield
Linda Maskill
Claire Screeton

Trustees

Canon Peter Townley (Chair)
Linda Maskill (Vice Chair)
Janet Milne
Claire Screeton
Joe Kinsella
Kathy Smith
David Selby
Helen Keeling

CURRICULUM AND OUTCOMES COMMITTEE

Linda Maskill (Chair)
Janet Milne
Canon Peter Townley

Trust Central Team

Chief Financial Officer
Director of Education
Governance and Compliance Professional
Governance and Compliance Officer
Finance and Operations Manager
Trust Phonics and Early Reading Specialist
Trust Mathematics and Teaching Specialist
Lead Headteacher- Leadership Development
Lead Headteacher- Teacher Training
Senior Finance and Admin Support Officer
External Consultants

Chief Executive Officer

Mark Randall

Advisors

Schofield-Sweeney Legal
AHR Building and Estates
AJG Gallagher Health and Safety

LOCAL ACADEMY BOARDS

CAPA College	Horbury Bridge CE Academy	Christ Church CE Academy	Batley Parish CE Academy	Diamond Wood Community Academy	Featherstone All Saints CofE Academy	Highburt on CE Academy	Lepton CE Academy	Overthorpe CofE Academy	Sandal Magna Community Academy	St. Botolph's CE Academy	St. Giles C of E Academy	St. Helen's CE Primary	St. Michael's CofE Academy
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Governance Structure: Roles

Members

The Members appoint Trustees to ensure that the Trust's charitable object is carried out. They are able to remove Trustees if they fail to fulfil this responsibility. There must be at least three Members, although the Department for Education's (DfE) strong preference is that Trust's should have at least five members. There must be a separation of powers between the Members and the Trust Board. While Members are permitted to be appointed as Trustees, in order to retain a degree of separation of powers between the Members and the Trust Board, and in line with DfE expectations, the majority of Members should be independent of the Board of Trustees. Members are not permitted to be employees of the Trust or to be related to employees of the Trust. Members have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring it fulfils its obligations, as described in its Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and its Articles of Association. They have agreed the Articles of Association (a document which outlines the governance structure and how the Trust will operate). The Articles of Association stipulate arrangements for the appointment and removal of Members and Trustees. The Members appoint Trustees to ensure that the Trust's charitable objects are carried out. The Members must meet at least annually, and will receive, from the Trust Board, an annual report on the performance of the Trust which includes the audited accounts.

Trustees

The Trust is a charitable company, and so Trustees are both charity Trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and Company Directors. Trustees are bound by both charity and company law. The terms 'Trustee' and 'Director' are often used interchangeably. Enhance Academy Trust uses the term 'Trustee'. The Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the Trust and, in accordance with the provisions set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, its Funding Agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook, they are legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of all schools within the Trust, and for the approval of a written Scheme of Delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements. The Trust Board is legally responsible and accountable to the Department for Education (DfE). The Board of Trustees has the right to review and adapt its governance structure at any time which includes removing delegation. Trustees are appointed for their knowledge, skills and experience, ensuring an appropriate balance between Church and non-church representation. The Board of Trustees meet monthly and provide non-executive leadership for the Trust and has overall legal responsibility for the operation of the Trust. It is the accountable Board for the performance of all schools within the Trust and as such must:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Hold the executive to account for the educational performance of the schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Oversee the financial performance of the Trust and make sure its money is well spent
- Comply with provisions set out in the Articles of Association of the Trust, the Master Funding Agreement, Supplemental Funding Agreements and the Academy Trust Handbook
- Determine a Scheme of Delegation the Board of Trustees is the employer of all staff and therefore is the final appeal Board in matters of pay and staff discipline. Trustees will approve the annual budget for each academy.

Trust Board Committees

The Trust Board has established committees with delegated powers.

Finance, Audit & Risk Committee: The Academy Trust Handbook states that Academy Trusts are required to establish an Audit & Risk committee. The committee is also responsible for financial oversight and scrutiny, ensuring that the Trust complies with its policies and procedures with a focus on financial planning, risks, reporting, and monitoring. At least three Trustees sit on this Committee. The Committee has clear Terms of Reference.

Curriculum & Outcomes Committee: The Committee's specific function is to support the Trust Board, CEO and relevant members of the Executive Team in their responsibilities for the educational performance of the Trust and its pupils in the context of the Trust's strategy. The Committee has clear Terms of Reference.

Chief Executive Officer

The Trust Board appoint the Chief Executive (CEO) to whom it delegates responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy of the Trust. The CEO is held to account for the conduct and performance of the Trust, including the performance of the academies within the Trust, and for financial management. The CEO has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the Trust including the performance of the Trust's academies, appointing Headteachers and other senior leaders as well as ensuring the performance management of the Headteachers is carried out effectively. The CEO is the Accounting Officer so has overall responsibility for the operation of the Trust's financial responsibilities and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability, avoiding waste and securing value for money. The CEO leads the Executive Team of the Trust. The CEO will delegate functions to the executive team and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for their performance.

Local Academy Boards

In the context of an Academy Trust, the performance of every individual school is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Board discharges this responsibility, primarily, through the function of the CEO and Executive Team of the Trust, who themselves are responsible (to the Board) for the performance of the school and its leaders. This is reinforced by the work of Local Academy Boards which are formal committees established by the Trust Board and have a brief to review and challenge performance in each school, independently of Trust management. The CEO and Executive Team will work with each Local Academy Board to continuously develop and deliver the highest standards of leadership and teaching and learning within the distinctive Christian ethos promoted by the Trust. The Trust recognises that establishing and developing good working relationships with each Local Academy Board is fundamental to the success of each academy. The Trust aims to deliver its responsibilities for each academy whilst establishing a Scheme that allows each Local Academy Board to function effectively and to play a role in the development of the academy and of the Trust.

Governance Structure: Composition of the Local Academy Boards

Each school in the Trust will have a Local Academy Board which is accountable to the Board of Trustees and will comprise of:

- **Headteacher (ex officio)**
- **One elected staff governor**
- **Two elected parent governors**
- **Principal Officiating Minister (ex officio) (In Church academies only)**
- **Up to five governors appointed by the Trust Board who may include Church nominated governors (in Church academies only) or Trust appointed governors selected on the basis of their skills or professional experience. Approval from the Diocesan Board of Education will be sought where necessary for Church academies.**

The minimum operating number for each Local Academy Board will be three. The maximum operating number will be ten.

The composition of the Local Academy Board shall be agreed by Trustees and will be reviewed annually. Governors serve a term of 4 years. Parent governors' terms of office come to an end when their child leaves the school, if this is before the end of their term (this includes CAPA College.) The Chair of Governors is appointed annually at the beginning of each academic year. Each year, expressions of interest in the role of Chair of the Local Academy Board are submitted and reviewed by the Trust Board who will then appoint a Chair to each board.

Expectations of the Local Academy Boards

The role of the Local Academy Board is to establish and maintain the ethos of the academy, to ensure this is locally relevant, and in the case of Church academies to develop and maintain its religious character. The Local Academy Board will provide support and challenge to the Headteacher of the academy in ensuring that every child makes good or better progress, and that parents and carers are fully involved in their child's education. The Board will provide assurance to the Trust Board regarding the quality of education and care for all learners within the academy and ensure effective engagement with local stakeholders. To maximise the ability of the local governors to focus on these key areas, the Local Academy Board is not required to manage financial resources, staffing or many of the areas traditionally associated with a Local Authority maintained school Governing Board as these issues are dealt with at a Trust level. However, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Local Academy Board does play a key role in safeguarding pupils.

Responsibilities of the Local Academy Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, values, ethos and strategic direction.
- Reviewing careers information, advice and guidance (CAPA College).
- Ensuring the implementation of the Trust's policies and the approval and review of school led policies, including the Admissions Policy.
- Participating in the governance discussion of a school's Ofsted inspection, or SIAMS inspection.
- Ensuring that suitable full-time education for any pupil of compulsory school age is arranged where the pupil has a fixed-period exclusion of more than five school days.
- Monitoring behaviour in school, including suspensions.
- Monitoring pupil and staff wellbeing.
- Monitoring pupil outcomes and outcomes of specific groups of pupils i.e., Special Educational Needs (SEND), Pupil Premium (PP.)
- Monitoring the impact on outcomes of specific sources of funding e.g., Pupil Premium/recovery premium, Primary PE and Sports Premium, SEND.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the school's identification, assessment and management of risks.
- Support school leaders to create a culture of inclusivity, diversity and equality.

The 5 S's of the Local Academy Board Delegated Responsibility

Areas	Delegated Function
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the implementation, the school's Safeguarding Policy and fostering a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff in their schools. Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure the necessary procedures are in place, which is supported through the appointment of a link governor. Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of Health and Safety arrangements within school.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring adequate resources are provided to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) that support their educational progress. Seeking assurances that staff are trained to implement strategies and support plans. Working in partnership with other stakeholders, such as parents, external agencies, and the wider Trust community, to ensure that pupils with SEND are well-supported and included in all aspects of school life.
Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)/Personal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain the school's religious character and distinctive Christian vision. (Church Academies.) Celebrate equity, diversity, belonging, inclusion and justice at every opportunity. Review the impact of the school's Christian vision on pupils, adults and the community. (Church Academies.)
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the school's performance by reviewing a range of information for example, curriculum approaches (including RE), assessment data, attendance rates and suspension rates. Working with senior leaders to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to address them in line with the Trust's strategic objectives.
Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the needs and concerns of all stakeholders are accounted for in the decision-making process and acting as a mouthpiece for their interests and voices at Trust level. Achieved through effective communication channels, consulting key stakeholders, and working in partnership with the local community.

Local Academy Boards: Ways of Working

The Local Academy Board works collectively as a 'whole team', meeting five times per year (four evening meetings and one day time meeting,) without any separate committees unless required for a specific reason (for example, admissions appeal, parental complaints or HR processes). Meeting agendas will include all the tasks which the Local Academy Board is required to consider, with a focus on reviewing the performance of the school. Local Academy Board meetings are supported by the Trust Governance and Compliance Professional and the Trust Governance and Compliance Officer, in collaboration with whom agendas are planned in line with areas of responsibility set out above. All

Local Academy Boards should appoint a Safeguarding governor, an SEN governor, a Health & Safety governor and a Careers Link Governor (CAPA College.)

The Local Academy Board should also identify governors who will monitor aspects of the Academy Improvement Plan as well as ensuring at least one governor has Cyber Security and Safer recruitment training. The Local Academy Board will be considerate of the well-being

Headteacher and staff, by referring to the DfE teacher workload reduction toolkit when necessary. In each case where a function has been delegated, there is a statutory duty for the delegated governor/s to report, by written monitoring reports, any findings, actions or recommended decisions to the Local Academy Board in time for its next meeting to enable informed collective strategic decision making. The Trust would not expect to be involved in most of the arrangements put in place by the Local Academy Board but reserves the right to attend meetings if they feel it appropriate. It is possible the Local Academy Board would want a representative of the Trust to attend a meeting and, subject to availability, the CEO or member of the Executive Team will attend.

Apologies: All governors must give apologies in advance for missing a meeting and this apology must be accepted by the other governors.

Attendance: Any governor whose attendance falls below 60% over a rolling year or who has a pattern over time of repeatedly missing meetings or who fails to tender apologies or whose reasons for missing meetings repeatedly are deemed unacceptable by the Local Academy Board may be warned and then dismissed by the Chair of the Local Academy Board on behalf of the Trust if absences continue.



Visiting your school

Visiting the school is an essential part of the governor role. Feedback and learning from visits allow the Local Academy Board to monitor how their strategy is being implemented, how policies are being implemented and to identify strengths and areas for development. School visits raise the profile of the Local Academy Board and provide governors with valuable insight into school life and culture. Visits will be focused on a specific area or priority and carried out by the governor who has been given responsibility for monitoring that area and reporting back to the board. The structure of five meetings across the academic year, with one meeting taking place during the school day allows governors greater opportunity to visit the school. We encourage governors to visit their school at least twice over the academic year if they are able to. A governor visits policy is in place and available for reference.



Asking the right questions

Questioning Academy Leaders and others is the main way in which you can learn about the academy. Holding leaders to account and supporting them to reflect on decisions is a vital component of governance. Minutes of Local Academy Board meetings will record the range and level of challenge and this is important evidence of strong and effective governance. Governors should consider the following when asking questions:

- ***Does this question focus on impact rather than process?***
- ***Is the question relevant to an agenda item?***
- ***Is this question strategic?***
- ***Does this question help the board better understand the discussion?***
- ***Has the question been answered and have further questions arisen?***

New Governor Induction

As part of your new role, it is recommended that the following checklist is completed to enable you to gain an understanding of the context of your school.

Action	Completed (tick)
Provide 3 forms of ID to the school to allow them to carry out DBS checks	
Invited by the Headteacher to visit the school	
Welcomed to the Local Academy Board by the Chair of the Board	
Visit the school and meet some pupils and staff	
Receive an informal briefing of the school from the Headteacher including current challenges faced by the school	
Receive a copy of the Academy Improvement Plan	
Receive a copy of the Enhance Scheme of Delegation	
Be assigned a governor mentor/ be directed to the Governance and Compliance Professional or Governance and Compliance Officer	
View the school's website	
Receive dates of board meetings for the year	



Governor Training



As a Trust we are members of the National governance Association and also have access to the NGA Learning Link. This offers a suite of online modules and resources which can be completed at any time. In addition to Learning Link, we offer a variety of both in house and external training sessions which are often recorded for governors to view at a time that is convenient for them. Completion of training should be reported to the Governance and Compliance Officer who will keep a log of all completed training. Tracking training allows the board to review progress and completion of training and supports in identifying skills gaps alongside the annual skills audit. Governors are encouraged to complete training, particularly relevant to their link roles. The Trust Governance and Compliance Professional and Governance and Compliance Officer can offer support in identifying relevant training and resources. Completion of the annual skills audit will drive training offerings.

As a new governor you are required to complete the following mandatory activities/training

Training/Activity	Provider	Location	Frequency
Strategic Safeguarding for Governors	WNTAI Educational Services	Virtual/ on demand recording of training	Annually
Read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024	Department For Education Statutory Guidance	Online	Annually
Microsoft Forms Governor Skills Audit	Enhance Academy Trust	Online	Annually
An Introduction to local Governance	Enhance Academy Trust	Virtual/ on demand recording of training	On commencement of role
National Governance Association Learning Link Module: Your Roles Responsibilities and Organisation	National Governance Association Learning Link	Online Learning	On commencement of role
National Governance Association Learning Link Module: Introduction to Local Governance	National Governance Association Learning Link	Online Learning	On commencement of role
Sign the Governor Code of Conduct	Enhance Academy Trust	Online/ Hard copy	Annually
Sign the Declaration of Interests	Enhance Academy Trust	Online/ Hard copy	Annually

The Governor Code of Conduct

By joining the Enhance Multi Academy Trust Local Academy Board, you agree to abide by the Governor Code of Conduct.

Each Governor is asked to sign a copy of the code of conduct, when they join the Local Academy Board and are asked to countersign and redate their original entry on an annual basis, otherwise they are required to complete a new entry.

Governors are expected to be agree to and abide by the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

1. Selflessness
We will act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity
We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests
3. Objectivity
We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability
We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness
We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty
We will be truthful.
7. Leadership
We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Useful Links

<u>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024</u>	Mandatory
<u>KCSIE Key Information</u>	
<u>Strategic Safeguarding Training for Governors 2024</u>	Mandatory
<u>Strategic Safeguarding Training for Governor PowerPoint 2024</u>	
<u>Governor Code of Conduct</u>	Mandatory
<u>Governor declaration of interests</u>	Mandatory
<u>Enhance Academy Trust Website</u>	
<u>NGA Module- Your roles responsibilities and organisation</u>	Mandatory
<u>Introduction to Local Governance</u>	Mandatory
<u>Scheme of Delegation</u>	Mandatory
<u>NGA Module List 2024</u>	
<u>For Schools & Trusts National Governance Association (nga.org.uk)</u>	
<u>The Great Big Governance Glossary</u>	
<u>Skills Audit Form</u>	Mandatory
<u>Governor Visits Policy</u>	

If you have any questions in respect of this handbook or require further support please contact:

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