**Being a Governor**

**within**

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**1. Letter from the Chief Executive Officer of the Active Learning Trust**

Dear Governor,

Thank you for being part of the local governing body (LGB) of your ALT academy and I really do appreciate your interest and commitment to make a difference to the life chances of the young people your academy serves. One of the great strengths of local governing bodies is that individuals bring their own areas of expertise, skills and knowledge to the team and we will work together to explore the areas in which your skills can be put to best use for the benefit of the academy and most importantly, pupils.

Although at times the role of governor can seem quite daunting, it is part of the Trust’s role to ensure that you gain confidence and enjoy the experience. We’ve therefore put together this short pack to help support induction and as an advice guide for experienced governors to ensure that you are able to be a fully informed and confident governor.

Each ALT academy has a local governing body (LGB) that has a set of delegated powers from the main ALT board of Trustees. The local governing body is accountable to the ALT board through the chair and minutes of its meetings. Trustees are kept informed of progress at each academy, by reports to meetings and visits, and sometimes an ALT board member will sit on the local governing body, or even chair it if needed.

The Trust appointed governors can be nominated by the academy or others in the community or simply put themselves forward. In any case, they need to complete a short application process, declare their commitment to supporting the aims and ethos of the academy and the Trust, and normally meet with a member of the Trust’s management team, before being appointed.

All governors are expected to sign the ALT Commitment of Undertaking Form, which outlines the minimum commitment that is expected by governors in order to carry out their duties. Governors must also agree to completing a Disclosure Barring Service check (DBS), and a Declaration of Interests Form. Examples are given within this pack.

ALT local governing bodies normally meet once each half term. The first meeting of the term will normally be a business meeting and will often focus on issues of teaching and learning, sometimes with input from key members of staff. In addition there are standing statutory panels for staff or pupil discipline and appeals but these only meet when required to do so.

Decisions are always made after full discussion in a full governing body meeting apart from rare occasions when the chair may need to make an urgent decision in conjunction with the Headteacher/Principal and/or a member of the Trust Board or leadership team. It is important that as far as possible, all views are heard, shared and respected but equally governors need to understand that there is a collective responsibility for their decisions. This means that even if a governor disagrees with a decision, he or she remains part of the corporate body that made the decision and must respect that. Naturally, there are times when you will be discussing sensitive or confidential issues and all governors also need to understand and respect the need for confidentiality at such times.

Please look at the rest of this pack and use it as a reference point. Think about areas that you would like to know more about and consider governor roles you would be interested in finding out more about. Think about a focus for an induction visit to the academy. For example, do you wish to have an in-depth look at a particular subject area, or an overview of academy life, or meet with a senior member of staff to gain an insight into their role and how they view the role of governors? Contact your Headteacher/Principal to arrange a personalised visit.

Thank you again for giving your time to this vital role and I look forward to working with you.

Gary Peile

Chief Executive

The Active Learning Trust

**2. Governance Structure of The Active Learning Trust**

The following guidance statement is from the Department of Education:

*" All boards need to regularly review their governance arrangements and MATs are no different. In MATs the Trust are responsible for the organisation's management and administration of its academies. As part of this it is their responsibility to ensure strong governance of their academies so standards remain high. We trust them to decide on the most appropriate arrangements for their Trust. They may choose to delegate duties to local governing bodies, or equivalent, but trustees remain responsible.”*

Taking the above into account, the Board of Trustees of the Active Learning Trust reviewed and revised the governance arrangements across the Trust during 2017/18 to consider how effective the current structure was, whilst ensuring governing bodies are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the best possible effect. The underlying aim was to continue to improve the education, well-being and life experiences of young people in ALT academies.

It was apparent that the Hub model adopted by ALT is highly regarded, and has been the subject of positive comments by the Regional Schools Commissioner and Ofsted. Academies, staff and governors are increasingly used to working together (whilst recognising some hubs have been able to develop more quickly than others), and it was therefore concluded sensible that the hub model underpins some elements of how local governing bodies can increasingly support each other. Recent growth, and the addition of new academies to the Trust, afforded the opportunity to consider alternatives to traditional Local Governing Bodies. For example, Albert Pye Primary Academy and Ravensmere Infant Academy have one governing body, which works to good effect, and there are other ‘natural’ partners that will benefit from adopting alternative models.

Given that ALT academies are of different size and across different phases, it was agreed not to enforce one model across all academies but rather consider which model would suit each area best. In addition it is important that the governance models remain under review so as to ensure maximum potential to deliver academy improvement, and arrangements remain based on a number of key requirements – for example the Trust must have a majority of the members of local bodies and parents must have representation on the local boards.

Each ALT Local Governing Body has two types of governor – Trust Governors and Parent Governors. Trust Governors are appointed (the chair is specifically appointed by the Trust board) and Parent Governors are elected.

Trust Governors have a specific duty to the Trust board as appointees in the role of the governing body. They are the eyes and ears of the Trust board locally and need to ensure that the work of the academy is aligned with the agreed vision and values of the Trust and to ensure that the strategic direction of the academy is aligned with that of the Trust.

The scheme of delegation is central in ensuring local governing bodies are clear as to their role. Duties delegated to academy bodies include monitoring standards, safeguarding and staff and pupil well-being.

It is ALT policy to keep the size of local governing bodies to a size that ensures meetings remain focused on the core business of the LGB and is done in as an efficient and effective a way as possible. The composition therefore is normally as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Single Academy LGB | Multi-Academy LGB |
| Chair | 1 X appointed by the Board | 1 X appointed by the Board |
| Headteacher/Principal | 1 X for duration of appointment | 1 X exec for duration of appointment OR  2 X Heads/Principals for duration of appointment |
| Head of Academy |  | One for each academy to attend – non-voting |
| Parent Governor | 2 X elected from parent community | One for each academy elected from parent community |
| Trust Governor | 4 X appointed by CEO on behalf of Board | 4 X appointed by CEO on behalf of Board (NB more to be appointed as required to ensure Trust governors are in the majority) |
| Staff | Up to 2 to be invited by Chair as appropriate to focus of meeting | Up to 2 to be invited by Chair as appropriate to focus of meeting |

**3. The Three Core Areas of Good Governance**

**What Academy Governors Do**

An academy governing body has a strategic role in the development of the academy, but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues – that is the role of the Head Teacher.

**Governors have three core areas:**

1. **Provide a Strategic View**

To help set and maintain the broad framework within which the Head Teacher and the Staff should run the academy

1. **Act as a Critical Friend**

To provide the Head Teacher with support and offer advice and information but also provide some challenge. The governing body is there to monitor and evaluate the academy’s effectiveness and governors should therefore be prepared to ask challenging questions

1. **To Ensure Accountability**

The Head Teacher and staff report to the governing body on the academy’s performance – both academically and financially. In turn the governing body is accountable to all stakeholders on the academy’s overall performance.

**What Academy Governors Should NOT Do**

1. Discuss their own child’s problems at a governors meeting
2. Discuss governance business with other members of the school community or breach confidentiality in any way
3. Engage in negative social media about the school
4. Act on behalf of the school (unless delegated to do so)

**4. Governor Support and Training**

As a new governor your first point of contact should be the Chair of your LGB. You may also be appointed a mentor to advise you through your first few months. From this point training will be developed as the needs of governors become evident or change over time, perhaps in response to national or local priorities. It will include input from ALT staff and any local service providers who have regular programmes of governor updates such as Governor Services or the HR & Personnel service provider engaged to assist the academy, model documents and webinar briefings etc. The sessions will be well focused and relevant, and tailored to your needs; allowing you to come to terms with the nuances of the role and the way the educational system works – including educational jargon.

ALT provide two hub-based sessions per year, which you are encouraged to attend. These sessions will give you an update of work and priorities across the Trust, allow you the opportunity to meet and work with governors from other academies within your Hub, and provide training on specific areas that are current to your academy.

Hopefully, you’re in academy governance for the long-term. There are training courses that will develop your expertise and knowledge in specific areas and prepare you for taking on a key role within the governing body. Some of the courses are also available online which gives you flexibility about when to complete the training.

**5. Code of Conduct for Governors**

*(Adapted from the National Governor Association’s Code of Practice)*

**The Local Governing Body should adopt the following principles and procedures:**

## Commitment

We accept that being a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energyand we agree to:

* be active and involved members of the governing body, attend regularly, and share responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups
* get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in academy activities
* attend training and take responsibility for our own learning and development as a governor
* prepare for meetings by reading paperwork beforehand

## Confidentiality

We recognise the need to observe complete confidentiality when required to do so by the governing body, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students and we will:

* not divulge information about members of staff or pupils inappropriately (including via social media)
* exercise great care if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue of the academy arises outside the governing body
* declare an interest if an item under discussion at any full or committee meeting of governors impinges upon our personal, family or financial situation

## Conduct

We agree to work as a member of the team at all times and be loyal to collective decisions; we will:

* encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means we will not speak out *against* majority decisions in public (or private) outside the governing body
* only seek to act on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so
* follow the procedures established by the governing body, when making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy
* follow the code of practice for visits established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher/Principal when making visits to academy
* always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy
* seek to develop effective working relationships with the head, staff and parents, and other relevant agencies and the community

**Communication**

* As governors we owe a duty of mutual trust and confidence to our academy, and to each other, which may be breached if unsuitable material is contained in any communication or correspondence, including all types of electronic communication, personal blogs, websites and social networking sites
* We will gain the agreement of the Chair and Headteacher/Principal prior to posting any content (written, vocal or visual) to the internet which identifies us as members of the governing body, or before speaking to the media.

## General

* We are responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures of the academy
* We recognise that the Headteacher/Principal is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the academy and the implementation of the curriculum
* We accept that all governors have equal status, and, although appointed by different groups, our overriding concern will be the welfare of the academy as a whole
* We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so
* 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 governance and will act appropriately
* We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect pupils and other academies.

**6. Governing Body Responsibilities**

Most people who decide to become academy governors want to make a difference and contribute in a way that will benefit the young people attending the academy. We can achieve this aim by working to support the leadership of the academy and by ensuring we adopt best practice in governance. It is important to remember that the Headteacher/Principal is responsible for the day to day running and organisation of the academy; governors provide quality assurance and strategic direction.

The LGB acts in accordance with the scheme of delegation agreed by the ALT Board. This scheme sets out what the Trust board asks the LGB to carry out on its behalf. In essence the role of the LGB (which should then underpin the work of the LGB) can be summarised as follows:

* Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
* Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
* Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

To expand on this, the key roles of the full governing body are to:

* work with the Headteacher/Principal and her or his senior team to provide strategic direction for the academy
* work with the Headteacher/Principal and her or his senior team to ensure the ethos and values of the academy are fit for purpose and in accordance with those of the Active Learning Trust.
* be a critical friend to the academy
* provide challenge and support as appropriate to ensure effective leadership and management of the academy
* monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the academy in delivery of the agreed strategic aims
* ensure all the statutory requirements of governance are delivered

This can be achieved by:

* working as a full governing body to ensure that academy leaders are held to account for the progress of pupils at the academy
* ensuring the academy has policies that will deliver the strategic aims
* taking on individual roles and responsibilities as governors to monitor specific areas within the academy and to develop expertise in critical areas such as safeguarding/child protection.

Governors become part of a team and we wish to ensure that we both utilise your skills effectively and also develop your knowledge and understanding of the role of effective governance in ensuring a high quality education and experience for all the young people and staff in the academy.

**Documentation**

Before every governing body meeting, papers will be issued that you at least ten working days in advance. You will need to read and be familiar with these and by reading documents in advance of the meeting, you can prepare questions for the academy leadership to seek clarification or delve deeper into the delivery of aims. These should be submitted to the clerk at least five days before the meeting to allow time for answers to be formulated. Papers will range from a Headteacher/Principal’s report to a policy to be adopted or the latest budget forecast or assessment data on how pupils in the academy are progressing, and information on how the Academy is performing in areas such as health and safety. The range is large and no one governor is expected to be an expert in all areas.

As well as the papers issued before meetings, there are some key documents relating to the academy and its governance that you will need to be familiar with:

* Academy Action Plan (development plan)
* Most recent Ofsted report or monitoring visit report
* Ofsted data dashboard
* Governor code of Conduct

Familiarity with these documents allows you to develop knowledge of the shared vision for the academy, its current strengths and weaknesses and the steps that are being taken to improve outcomes for pupils.

Education is a world of acronyms and even seasoned practitioners are sometimes unable to unscramble some that are in current use. A list of such acronyms is included in this pack and, while there is no suggestion that you should learn them all, the occasional run through the list might be helpful. Also, don’t be afraid to challenge the use of acronyms that you don’t understand during LGB or Committee meetings.

1. **Committees**

ALT do not advocate the need for separate committees of the LGB. However, from time to time, it may be necessary for governors to appoint committees to work on specific areas or projects. Should such an occasion arise, committees should draw up appropriate terms of reference, and abide by the following overarching statements of intent:

1. The committee should exist to assist the decision making of the LGB, by enabling more detailed consideration to be given to the best means of fulfilling the LGB’s responsibility to ensure sound management of the academy’s finances and human resources, including proper planning, monitoring and probity.
2. The committee should only make appropriate comments and recommendations on the management of the academy’s resources (including finance, premises, staffing) as appropriate to its function and terms of reference.

*It should be noted that committees do not have delegated powers and major issues will be referred to the full LGB for ratification*.

**Statutory Committees**

Governors may be also be asked to join the following panels should the need arise:

**Pupil discipline panel**

*considers decisions made by the Headteacher/Principal to permanently exclude a pupil*

**Staff dismissal panel**

*considers staff dismissal cases e.g. redundancy*

**Staff dismissals appeal panel**

*considers appeals following from decisions made by the staff dismissal panel*

**Pay review appeals panel**

*considers appeals against teacher’s pay decisions made by the Headteacher/Principal*

**Employee grievance or disciplinary panel/appeals panel**

*to consider staff grievance or discipline matters or appeals in accordance with the HR Policies in operation.*

In addition, Trust governors are sometimes asked to support other ALT academies by undertaking duties that governors are unable to carry out at their own academies, for example being part of a panel to hear an admission appeal.

The Active Learning Trust recommends that all governors agree to be members of Statutory Committees, giving the person convening a hearing (usually The Clerk to Governors) flexibility should an occasion arise.

1. **Governor Roles & Responsibilities**

There is a statutory requirement that each LGB appoints to certain governance positions. These include:

**Chair of Governors -** to lead the team of governors in order to enable it to function effectively and efficiently.

**Vice-Chair of Governors –** to support the chair and deputise for the chair as required.

**Child Protection or Safeguarding Governor -** to ensure that child protection is receiving proper consideration and that the governing body is discharging its statutory duties.

**SEN Governor -** to champion the issue of special educational needs within the work of the governing body and to have specific oversight of the academy’s arrangements and provision for meeting pupils' special educational needs.

**Health & Safety Governor** – to have specific oversight of the academy’s arrangements for ensuring the health & safety of all members of the academy community, that that statutory regulations are enforced.

**Curriculum Links** - to consider, in addition to above roles,attachinggovernors to curriculum areas

Further information on each of the above roles are outlined on the following pages.

**Special Educational Needs (SEND) Governor**

The governing body should have an SEND Governor to champion the issue of special educational needs within the work of the governing body and to have specific oversight of the academy’s arrangements and provision for meeting special educational needs.

**Why does the Governing Body need an SEND Governor?**

The Governing Body has some key responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs.

Governing bodies should, with the headteacher, decide the academy's general policy and approach to meeting pupils' special educational needs.

They must set up appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and oversee the academy's work.

In particular, the governing body has a legal duty to:

* Do its best to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs are appropriately catered for;
* Appoint a ‘responsible person’ to oversee the assessment of individual pupils’ needs and to make sure that all staff likely to teach pupils with special needs are aware of those needs;
* Ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for any pupils with special educational needs;
* Ensure that pupils with special educational needs have the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of academy life;
* Ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the academy that their child has special educational needs;
* Establish an SEND policy which is publicly available and can be easily understood by parents; and review that policy on a regular basis
* Report on how the academy’s SEN policy is being implemented and how resources are allocated in the governing body’s Annual Report to Parents;
* Ensure that the SEND Code of Practice is followed

**Governing bodies should delegate some of these responsibilities to a named SEND Governor who reports back to the governing body on a regular basis.**

**What skills and qualities are needed?**

* An interest in special educational needs
* Good communication skills, with a willingness to report back verbally at
* meetings or to provide a brief written report
* Time and availability – in particular to meet regularly with the SENCO, to
* visit the academy and to take advantage of relevant briefing and training
* opportunities
* Enthusiasm and energy
* A willingness to participate in the development and review of the academy’s SEND policy

**What does the role of SEND Governor involve?**

* Developing and maintaining an awareness of special needs provision in the academy on behalf of the governing body
* Understand how the responsibilities for SEND provision are shared within the academy
* Discuss with academy staff the outcomes of the academy’s monitoring and evaluation of the provision made for pupils with special educational needs;
* Observe at first-hand what happens in academy both inside and outside the classroom to ensure that SEND pupils are actively involved in all aspects of academy life;
* Ensure the academy keeps you informed about developments in the area of special educational needs, nationally, locally and within the academy
* Support the implementation of the academy’s Special Educational Needs Policy
* Be familiar with the SEND policy and involved in its review and development;
* Agree with the governing body and the headteacher the indicators which should be reported on by the academy to the governing body to say whether the policy is working, and the timescale for that reporting
* Ensure that the SEND policy is linked to the Academy Development Plan and the budget setting process
* Ensure that funds are allocated each year within the academy budget specifically to cater for SEND pupils and to support the implementation of the SEND policy; be aware of the various headings under which the academy spends the SEND budget each year (i.e. resources, training, support assistants, SENCO management time, medical time etc.)
* Monitor and evaluate the use of these funds and other resources considering cost effectiveness and best value for money in terms of increased progress for pupils with SEND
* Encourage the governing body to ensure that all academy policies are consistent with the aims of the special educational needs policy Sharing information
* Discuss the outcome of academy visits with the SEND Coordinator and the headteacher;
* Report on a termly basis to the full governing body on the implementation of the academy’s SEND policy;
* Encourage effective communication with parents on the academy’s support for pupils with special needs

**What does the SEND Governor need to know?**

The SEND Governor should aim to meet the Headteacher and SENCO on a termly basis to keep up-to-date with SEND developments within the academy and to review the implementation of the SEN policy on an ongoing basis. A good relationship with the SENCO is key to the effectiveness of the SEN Governor. The sort of issues the SEND Governor might discuss with the SENCO and other

academy staff will include:

* Current numbers of the SEND register at the different stages (but not their

names)

* Identification procedures for pupils with SEND
* Staffing arrangements for pupils with SEND
* Staff training
* Use of resources
* How pupils with SEND are ensured access to the curriculum
* Provision being made for individuals
* Progress on any parts of the Academy Improvement Plan relating to SEND
* Progress with the implementation of the SEND policy
* Whether statutory reporting requirements are being met
* Liaison with external agencies and support services
* Links with special/mainstream academies
* Communication with parents

***Whilst the SEND Governor is not responsible for the day to day management of special needs provision in the academy, he or she may on occasion have access to sensitive information about the circumstances of individual children, particularly in smaller academies. It is essential that the SEND Governor respects the confidentiality of such information.***

**How should the governing body support the SEND Governor?**

It is important that the governing body both understands the role of the SEN Governor and supports the SEND Governor in carrying out that role.

The Governing Body will need to:

* Establish the responsibilities that the SEND Governor should undertake and provide support for the role
* Take an informed interest in special educational needs issues
* Monitor, evaluate and review the Special Educational Needs policy on a regular basis
* Ensure that the other academy policies fully support the principle of inclusion for all pupils
* Provide an opportunity for any outgoing SEND Governor to pass on information

**Human Resources Management & Governor Link**

**The staffing of the academy is its most precious resource and the large majority of the academies financial resources are expended on ensuring the proper remuneration and management of the academies human resources. All governors will play an important role in the HR management of the academy.**

It is important that governors have a general understanding of the key employment policies, procedures and practices, and that they stand ready to support and/ or challenge the Headteacher in applying them in the day to day management of the staff of the academy.

The role of governors in the delivery of secure and appropriate human resources management will vary somewhat between academies across the Trust because the Trust has inherited the majority of its staff on transfer arrangements from their former LA employers, and results in some variance between levels of involvement of governors. However in general the role of governors will be:-

* To hold the Head to account for having in place robust performance management arrangements for teaching and support staff.
* To determine the appropriateness of recommendations from the Headteacher for Performance Related Pay (PRP) increases and that they are based on a fair and transparent assessment procedure which accords with the academy and Trust Pay Policy. This will include hearing of appeals brought by members of staff against the judgements of the Headteacher.
* To ensure that an appropriate staffing structure is in place for the academy and to hold the Headteacher to account for the allocation of the academy’s financial resources for staffing so that it best delivers the teaching learning and support functions of the academy. Where staffing restructures need to take place the governors involved, in the reduction/redundancy process, in close consultation with ALT, will hold the Headteacher to account for the proper and fair conduct of the redundancy processes.
* The Chair of the LGB will be expected to work with the Chief adviser of the Trust in the performance assessment of the Headteacher once the academy has been a member of the Trust for at least one year.
* To ensure that the Headteacher provides the committee with appropriate reporting on the equal opportunities characteristics of recruitment to and make- up of the academy and determines appropriate strategies to improve representation.
* To take part in recruitment and selection processes for some categories of staff at the academy when determined, in liaison with the Headteacher.

Importantly governors will also ensure that processes and procedures relating to the conduct, attendance, discipline and capability of staff at the academy are properly and fairly carried out and are in line with the HR Polices of the academy and the Trust. Where there is a need for both first hearing and appeal stages of a process it may be necessary for governors to become members of hearing panels. Such responsibilities and activities will relate to:-

**Capability** – To hear appeals against first or final warnings and to hear cases or appeals against Headteacher decisions where dismissal of a member of staff is involved.

**Disciplinary** – To hear cases and/or appeals about matters of staff conduct, including dismissal for gross misconduct where this is relevant.

**Flexibility** – To hear appeals against decisions by the Headteacher on requests for flexible working and job sharing arrangements

**Grievance** – To hear grievances of some categories of staff (especially senior staff where it may not be appropriate for these to be heard by academy employees due to seniority issues) where it is not policy for this to be undertaken by the Headteacher. To hear appeals against outcomes/sanctions where the decision of the Headteacher is challenged

**Absence/Attendance** – To hear cases/appeals (depending on the levels of delegation present in the academies policies) concerning warnings or dismissals.

In addition, governors will also:-

* Agree the provisions for counselling and well-being services to be provided and funded by the academy
* Put in place classroom observation and monitoring protocols for the management of teacher appraisal and receive review and challenge the Headteachers assumptions concerning the quality of teaching and learning in the academy.
* Hear and determine complaints against the staff or the academy where the complainant is not satisfied with the Headteacher’s response. Such complaints will be considered by a panel of three persons, two of which will be governors of the academy, in line with the Academy Complaints Policy

As a specific role the Chair of Governors (or his/her nominee) will;-

* Approve absence requests and arrangements for the Headteacher alongside the CEO of the Trust
* Undertake (or delegate to another named governor) responsibilities for the performance management and appraisal of the Headteacher alongside the CEO of the Trust
* Deal with grievance or disciplinary matters relating to the Headteacher, in line with the policies and procedures of the Academy.

**Safeguarding Governor**

**Current legislation places a duty on agencies to ensure that their functions are discharged having a duty of care with regard for the need to safeguard children and promote their welfare.**

By safeguarding and promoting welfare we mean:

* Protecting children from abuse or neglect
* Preventing impairment of the child’s health or development
* Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and in a learning environment where they feel safe and secure and confident to learn, addressing any barriers to learning
* Creating opportunities to enable all children to achieve their very best in preparation for adulthood.

It is recommended that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor should not be a parent governor as this could lead to them being compromised in the event of a disciplinary matter.

The safeguarding governor will:

* Need to be familiar with guidance and policy relating to safeguarding and child protection and associated issues, and to attend training for nominated Safeguarding and Child Protection governors
* Be responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body puts into place effective procedures to safeguard all children in line with the Trust’s safeguarding and pupil well-being policy and be a champion for safeguarding and child protection issues within the academy
* Encourage other members of the governing body to develop their understanding of the governing body’s responsibilities with regard to child protection and assist them to perform their functions in respect of safeguarding children and young people
* Contribute to ensuring any deficiencies in the academy’s safeguarding practices are addressed which may be brought to governors’ attention by a member of academy staff, a parent, an officer of the Local Authority or from any other source
* Meet regularly with a senior member of the academy’s team who is the designated member of staff for safeguarding and child protection in order to monitor the effectiveness of the governing body’s procedures, including the management of the SCR. It is recommended that this is at least a half termly meeting.

***The safeguarding governor will also ensure that the governing body receives an annual report on the implementation of the Trust’s policy and school procedures and that this report includes how the academy has ensured the following is in place****:*

* arrangements for ensuring that the Trust’s policy and school procedures are communicated to, and implemented by, all staff
* a designated member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection who is a senior member of academy staff and has sufficient time and resources at his/her disposal to carry out his/her duties effectively
* targeted and regular training for DSLs and alternate DSLs in line with legal requirements and statutory guidance
* regular updated training in child protection undertaken by ALL staff, including midday meal supervisors, clerical staff and other ancillary staff
* arrangements for the inclusion of safeguarding and child protection procedures in an induction programme for all staff working in the academy, no matter for how long, nor the status of that individual
* arrangements to ensure safer recruitment and employment procedures and undertakes and records appropriate checks on all staff and volunteers such that they are cleared to work with unrestricted access to children
* a chronological record of the number of pupils currently subject to a child protection plan ***(NB details of names will not be provided to maintain confidentiality)***
* an explicit record of how safeguarding and child protection issues, including assessing risk and keeping safe, are addressed through the curriculum
* information to the LA about how the governing body’s duties with respect to safeguarding and child protection have been discharged.

In addition, the governing body must ensure that the requirements of the Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation and guidance on Safer Recruitment and Employment practices in academies are carried out properly. This will include ensuring that at least one member of every interview panel for the recruitment of staff (teaching and support) has received safer recruitment training delivered by an approved training provider.

Governors should refer to the Active Learning Trust’s policy ‘Safeguarding and Pupil Well-being’ for further information.

**Pupil Premium Link Governor**

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to have a link governor for the use of the pupil premium, given the importance given to raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, governing bodies may well wish to consider such a role. In determining how that role is carried out the following may be useful when determining who on the governing body could carry out that role:

**The Importance of knowing your academy**

* Obtain information and data on and become familiar with the academy's use of the pupil
* Know basic pupil premium facts for the academy, such as how many pupils attract the premium, how this figure compares with other local and similar academies, and how the money is spent
* Meet termly with the staff responsible for performance data to discuss issues around under-performing groups, including those eligible for the pupil premium
* Challenge the allocation of the pupil premium grant if there is no clear audit trail evidencing appropriate use of the resources

**Monitoring data**

* Understand relevant academy pupil performance data that shows progress of different groups over time
* Ensure the academy is monitoring and reporting on spending of the pupil premium, ensuring the money is spent in identifiable ways to support target groups of pupils
* Ensure the academy is monitoring and reporting on the attainment of different groups of pupils over time to provide evidence of how pupil premium pupils are progressing compared with others

**Governing body meetings**

* Take an active part in any governing body discussions when the allocation and monitoring of the pupil premium is discussed and decided
* Report back to the governing body on the academy's use of the pupil premium

**Attendance Link Governor**

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to have a link governor for attendance, given the importance of attendance for learning in raising aspirations and standards of achievement, governing bodies may well wish to consider such a role. In determining how that role is carried out the following may be useful when determining who on the governing body could carry out that role:

* An awareness of the academy’s attendance policy and Ofsted expectations
* A strategic understanding of the connection between attendance, teaching and learning, behaviour for learning, parent/carer pupil engagement and achieving high standards for all pupils
* An ability to interpret attendance data and challenge the headteacher and senior leaders to secure improvements through a range of interventions, as appropriate
* Check the academy is regularly monitoring attendance, reviewing progress and taking action
* Meet termly with the academy attendance lead to scrutinise plans on improving attendance including rewards for good attendance, escalation processes for those who struggle with attendance, links with external support agencies where additional challenge is required
* Make sure that parent/carer issues are addressed in liaison with the family liaison/support worker team
* Track the profiling of the importance of attendance in classrooms, around the academy, on the academy website, in communications with parents/carers
* Report to governors on the outcomes of discussions, identifying areas of concern as well as highlighting examples of effective practice

**Health and Safety Governor**

The role of the governor with a lead in monitoring health and safety in academy is important both in terms of supporting academy leaders and the Trust but also in ensuring the governing body is supported in its role to monitor health and safety at the academy.

The Trust supports the following Health and Safety Executive advice on the role as being:

* To take reasonable steps to make sure that the academy is following the Trust's policy and procedures e.g. through regular discussion at governance meetings.
* Ensure that academy leaders have supported staff through the receipt of adequate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.
* To help promote a sensible approach to health and safety, making use of competent health and safety advice when required.
* To report back to the governing body and its committee on how well the academy is meeting its obligations and to ensure areas for improvement are highlighted and acted upon.
* Ensure the LGB receives feedback and updates on areas of health and safety across the academy, including reports from the Trust’s health and safety management system.
* In overall terms the governor with the link role should work in close partnership with the head teacher and senior management team to support sensible health and safety management and to challenge as appropriate.

1. **National Governors Association**

As a member of a Local Governing Body of The Active Learning Trust, you will automatically become a member of the National Governors Association – an organisation that gives guidance and advice for academy governors.

Please let Karen Jarvis know the email address you would like to register with by emailing [Karen.jarvis@activelearningtrust.org](mailto:Karen.jarvis@activelearningtrust.org) so that your membership can be activated. This will enable you to access the ‘members only’ area of NGA website.

Once your membership has been activated by ALT, follow the instructions below to view the site:-

Go to [http://www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk/) and click the 'Log In' button at the top of the page. Once on the Login page, please click on the forgotten password link and then enter your email address. The password will be sent to your email. Once you have the password please enter your email address and then the password you were given to log on. You can change the password at your convenience.

1. **Key Acronyms and Useful Websites**

DfE: Department for Education

A levels – Advanced level examinations (usually taken at age 17/18)

AFL – Assessment for Learning

AHT – Assistant Headteacher

APL – Accreditation of prior learning

APP – Assessing Pupil Progress

AS level – Advanced subsidiary examination

AST – Advanced skills teacher

CAF – Common Assessment Framework

CPD – Continuing professional Development

DDP – Department development Plan

DHT – Deputy Headteacher

EAL – English as an Additional Language

ECM – Every Child Matters

EWO – Education Welfare Officer

EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage

FD – First Diploma

FE – Further Education

FSPs – Foundation Stage Profile points

GCSE – General Certificate Secondary Education

GTCE – General Teaching Council for England

HE – Higher Education

HOD – Head of Department

HLTA – Higher Level Teaching Assistant

IB – International Baccalaureate

ICT – Information Communication Technology

IEP – Individual Education Plan

INSET – In-service Educational Training

ITT – Initial Teacher training

KS – Key Stage, e.g. KS2 Key Stage 2

LA – Local Authority (previously known as LEA – Local Education Authority)

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher

LSA – Learning Support Assistant

NC – National Curriculum

ND – National Diploma

NQF – National Qualification Framework

NVQ – National Vocational Qualification

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education

PPA – Planning Preparation Assessment

QCDA – Qualification Curriculum Development Agency

QTS – Qualified Teacher status

SATs - Standard Assessment Tasks

SDP – Academy Development Plan

SEAL – Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning

SEF – Self Evaluation Form

SEND – Special Education Needs

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

SMT – Senior Management Team

TA – Teaching Assistant

UCAS – Universities & Colleges Admissions Service

VP – Vice Principal

**Department for Education**

Information, news and current consultations from the Department for Education

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

**Governornet**

Updates on the Governors’ Guide to the Law and other publications

[www.governornet.co.uk](http://www.governornet.co.uk)

**Governorline**

Free, confidential advice, information and support to Academy Governors, clerks and individuals involved directly in the governance of maintained academys in England.

[www.governorline.info](http://www.governorline.info)

**National Governors’ Association (NGA)**

Represents academy governors in England, including lobbying ministers and policy makers.

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

**Ofsted**

Matters relating to inspection of academies and Ofsted inspection reports

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Information about external links from The Active Learning Trust**

The Active Learning Trust website includes links to websites provided by other organisations

[www.activelearningtrust.org](http://www.activelearningtrust.org)

The Trust is not responsible for the content of these sites and accepts no liability for material within them.

**Appendix A**

**THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST**

**APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS TO LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES OF**

**THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST ACADEMYS AND ACADEMIES**

**COMMITMENT OF UNDERTAKING**

The Active Learning Trust recognises and appreciates the level of undertaking involved in becoming a member of the Local Governing Body of one of our schools or academies.

The Trust places great reliance on the willingness, skills and abilities offered by the governors it appoints in carrying out the important functions of the Local Governing Body and in representing both the academy or academy and the Trust in delivering positive outcomes for the pupils, students and families we serve, and in protecting and enhancing the reputation of the academy or academy, its community and the Active Learning Trust as a whole.

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation in operation for the Active Learning Trust, we ask that all our governors positively and willingly declare the following commitment to their work with us:-

* To use their best endeavours to utilise their skills and abilities to the benefit of the academy/academy in which they operate and to the Active Learning Trust as a whole
* To attend meetings events and functions of the Governing Body as regularly as they are practically able so to do
* To be thorough accurate and diligent in all their undertakings on behalf of the academy/academy and the Trust
* To abide by the policies, protocols and procedures which apply to the academy/academy and across the Trust as a whole
* To support and uphold the aims and vision of the Active Learning Trust as a force for educational improvement.

**I ………………………………………………………….. as an appointed governor of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Academy/School do declare that I will support and uphold the undertaking requested above**.

Signed

Full Name Date

**Appendix B**

**Constitution Regulations**

**Covering the Qualifications and Disqualifications of Governors**

A governor mustbe aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election or appointment and cannot hold more than one governorship at the same academy.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor or associate member if he or she:

* is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order or an interim order;
* has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
* is subject to:
* a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Act 1986
* a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
* a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
* an order made under Section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a County Court administration order);
* has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the Charity Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under Section 34 of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from participating in the management or control of any body;
* is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children;
* is disqualified from working with children or subject to a direction under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002;
* is disqualified from registration for childminding or providing day care;
* is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006;
* has received a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before or since becoming a governor;
* has received a prison sentence of 2 years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
* has at any time received a prison sentence of 5 years or more;
* has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on academy premises during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor;
* is employed at the academy for more than 500 hours per academic year if wishing to stand for parent governor at the same academy;
* is an elected member of the Local Authority (applies to parent and community governors only).