

Terms of Reference for the Community, Staff and Parental Links Portfolio of the Board of Trustees of the United Schools Trust

Agreed at meeting of the full trust board on 18 September 2023. Community, Staff and Parental Links Portfolio holder is Marcus West and Lisa Cummings for GDPR aspects of the portfolio. Jane Collings is the Portfolio holder for Staff links

Review date September 2024

These terms of reference should be reviewed annually by the Board and when there are any changes to the Board's membership.

The trust board responsibilities for teaching and learning including links with parents

The Trust board is the strategic lead for the school and has a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. The Governance Handbook states that one of the core functions of the trust board is: *'Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff'*. They should do this by making sure they have at least one trustee with specific skills and experience of performance data, and by asking questions such as:

- Which groups of pupils are the highest and lowest performing, and why? Do you have credible plans for addressing underperformance or less than expected progress? How will we know that things are improving?
- Which year groups or subjects get the best and worst results and why? How does this relate to the quality of teaching across the school? What is your strategy for improving the areas of weakest performance?
- How are you going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those with special educational needs, those receiving free school meals, boys and girls, those of a particular ethnicity, and any who are currently underachieving?
- Have your decisions been made with reference to external evidence, such as Ofsted's Data Dashboard, Analyse School Performance service (formerly RAISEonline), Fischer Family Trust etc. How will you know if your approach is working? Will the impact of decisions and interventions be monitored and supported?
- Is this a happy school with a positive learning culture? What is our track record on attendance, behaviour and bullying? Are safeguarding procedures securely in place? What are we doing to address any current issues, and how we will know if it is working?
- How good is our wider offer to pupils? Is the school offering a good range of sports, arts and voluntary activities? Is school food healthy and popular?
- Do we listen to what pupils and parents are telling us?

Many trustees may not be familiar with looking at and understanding data. There is a large volume of data available. It is essential that every trust board has at least one trustee with the skills to understand and interpret the full detail of the performance data available. These trustees should make sure that the wider trust board has an accurate understanding of the school's performance. They should identify from the data the issues that most need to be discussed. Other trustees should learn from them and undertake any available training opportunities to improve their confidence and skills in looking at data.

Best Value

The board will ensure the principles of Best Value are followed when making decisions. The principles of best value are:

- Challenge – why, how and by whom an activity is carried out;
- Compare – performance against other schools and between parts of each school;
- Consult – involving stakeholders, especially pupils and parents;
- Compete – as a means of securing efficient and effective services.

Matters of Urgency

These may be dealt with by the chair of trustees and the principal and reported to the next meeting of the full board.

Delegation

Trust boards may use their powers to delegate functions and decisions to individual trustees. It is the overall board, however, that in all cases remains accountable in law and to Ofsted for the exercise of its functions. (Governance Handbook.)

Levels of Delegation - Decision or Recommendation

D = **decision** to be taken by the portfolio holders and reported to the trust board in the minutes.

R = the portfolio holders to make a **recommendation** to the trust board, who will make the decision.

*Note from The Governance Consultancy Team: The level of delegated decision making given to a portfolio holder needs to be agreed by the full board. Full delegation (within legal requirements) is suggested within these terms of reference, but you may wish to set different levels with the portfolio holder making more recommendations and fewer decisions. Whatever you decide, make sure there is no duplication between the work of the portfolio holder and the full board. **All delegated decisions must be reported to the full board through notes from the portfolio holder.***

Portfolio holders will undertake appropriate training in order to fully understand their role including, where possible and appropriate, joining relevant staff training to keep updated.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE ASSUME THE BOARD ALSO HAS A SAFEGUARDING LEAD TRUSTEE AND A PUPIL PREMIUM LEAD TRUSTEE.

Community, Staff and Parental Links

Policies and Documents delegated to these portfolio holders:

- Complaints Procedure (Statutory)
- Data Protection Policy (Statutory)
- Freedom of Information (FoI) Publication Scheme (Statutory)
- Privacy Notices
- Statement of the school's Ethos and Values published on school website (Statutory)
- Home School Agreement

(If the board has a GDPR lead in place the Data Protection policy, Privacy Notices and FoI Scheme may be delegated to them.)

To assist the principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in promoting good relationships and communication with parents and the wider community.	D	MW
Ensure that the needs of stakeholders are monitored and there is an opportunity for individuals and groups to communicate their opinions and concerns. Ensure that the school (and the board where applicable) regularly consults with staff, parents and pupils, giving them an opportunity to contribute in the development of policies and procedures which will impact on them. Support	D	MW

the board in using parental views to inform the school's self-evaluation and strategic planning to improve the education of pupils. Ensure that parents, pupils and staff have a role in contributing to the board's vision for the school.		
To monitor the quality and effectiveness of information for stakeholders on the school website, including ensuring statutory policies and governance information appears on the website in a timely manner.	R	MW
Report back to parents, pupils and staff the results and the changes trustees make as a result of listening to their views	D	MW
To ensure a Complaints Procedure is in place, is appropriately reviewed and is monitored to ensure that it is followed consistently. Review any complaints once they have been dealt with (both formal and informal) to identify any common themes. Investigate any changes in practice required and recommend to the full governing board.	R	MW
If the school has a home-school agreement in place review the agreement and seek input from stakeholders (pupils, parents and carers, staff) to inform changes in the document.	R	MW
Act as champions for well-being and mental health for both staff and pupils. Analyse responses to the staff wellbeing survey to help understand the key issues in the school, and use information from the survey to assess the impact of any measures being taken to support staff wellbeing.	D	MW
Monitor key aspects of mental health and emotional wellbeing and be aware of what is being done to promote a positive environment for children and young people. Identify how the school ensures timely identification, support and mentoring of vulnerable children and young people who may benefit from targeted support.	D	MW
To keep the board up to date with work undertaken by the portfolio holder through regular (at least termly) written reports supplied to the FGB.	D	MW/JC
Contribute to the development of the annual surveys for parents, staff and/or pupils (as applicable). Analyse the responses from the survey(s) and report to the board.	D	MW
Ensure that members of the board and staff are aware of the code of conduct when using social media.	R	MW
Monitor and evaluate work life balance issues for staff, the SLT and members of the board. Review the school's use of job share arrangements, part-time working, flexible working, and staff workload to see if strategies are effective.	D	JC
Monitor levels of staff absence and the reasons for absence to identify any potential areas of concern.	D	JC
Monitor responses to staff exit interviews to identify any potential areas of concern.	D	JC
To encourage wider networking with other schools in the locality, nationally and internationally to inform and enhance opportunities for children and young people, facilitate staff development and sharing of good practice, moderation of pupils' work, transition processes and benchmarking.	R	JC
To ensure the statutory duties relating to pupil record keeping, disclosure of information and pupil reports are fulfilled. Including reviewing and updating the Data Protection Policy and the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, in consultation with the DPO. Monitor that the DPO has provided appropriate training for staff, governors and the school can demonstrate compliance with Data Protection Law. (May be delegated to the GDPR lead trustee.)	D	LC
Seek confirmation from the DPO that the school (or MAT) is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) as a Data Controller. (May be delegated to the GDPR lead trustee.)	D	LC
Working with the DPO, ensure that governors/trustees are aware that responsibility for compliance with data protection legislation lies with them and that they are kept informed about all key issues arising for the schools from the legislative changes and understand how to effectively monitor and review compliance. (May be delegated to the GDPR lead trustee.)	D	LC
Liaise with the Data Protection Officer (DPO) to monitor and evaluate any data breaches and near misses to identify any changes in practice required. Ensure that any notifiable breaches are reported to the board. (May be delegated to the GDPR lead trustee.)	D	LC