

# Terms of Reference for the SEND portfolio of the Board of Trustees of the United Schools Trust

Agreed at meeting of the full trust board on 13 September 2021. **SEND Portfolio is David Barnett**

Review date September 2022

*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 holder and reported to the trust board in the minutes.

R = the portfolio holder makes 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.*

## Inclusion/SEND

### Policies and Documents delegated to this portfolio:

- SEND Policy and information relating to SEND provision published on school website (Statutory)
- Equality Policy (or information) and Equality Objectives (Statutory)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy (Statutory)
- Education of Children in Care Policy
- Behaviour Policy & Behaviour Principles (Statutory)
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection Policy (Statutory) – Safeguarding Portfolio Holder
- Devon County Council Safeguarding Audit
- Admissions Policy VA/Foundation (including Trust) schools only (Statutory)
- Exclusion procedures (if not included in Behaviour Policy) (Statutory)

To champion the requirements of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities by contributing to the development of a SEND Policy, including provision for more able children, to recommend to the full trust board. Highlight any resourcing/finance/staffing issues to the Finance and Personnel Lead Trustees.	<b>R</b>
Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the agreed SEND policy and report to the full board. Ensure relevant statutory information relating to SEND is published on the school website, updated at least annually and when any changes occur.	<b>D</b>
To ensure the needs of <i>all</i> pupils are met by ensuring the relevant policies, practices and procedures are in place and being implemented effectively for all vulnerable groups. (Including, but not limited to: children in care; pupils with medical needs in school; pupils with English as a second language; pupils eligible for Free School Meals; ethnic minority and traveller pupils; forces children, pupils with protected characteristics, SEND pupils.)	<b>D</b>
To consider impact for pupils, parents and staff with protected characteristics when developing/reviewing policies. To monitor the school's engagement with individuals with protected characteristics and ensure that they are given an opportunity to contribute to the development of school processes and procedures.	<b>D</b>
To assist with the identification of Equality Objectives for ratification by the board and monitor progress towards these objectives, reporting to the board at least annually	<b>R</b>
To ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements relating to equality legislation including publishing the Equality Objectives, equality information (or an agreed policy) on the school website to show how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.	<b>D</b>
To ensure the governing board meets their statutory duty to be involved in the formulation of the 'Local Offer' with the Local Authority.	<b>D</b>
Ensure an attendance register is taken daily at school. Monitor pupil attendance figures and patterns. Review and evaluate progress towards the schools' attendance targets. Monitor exclusion procedures and exclusion data, including pupils on a part time curriculum. Have due regard for children potentially missing from education. Review the Attendance Policy.	<b>D</b>
To review and agree, with the principal, the Behaviour Policy based on the Behaviour Principles set by the board. Check that the Policy and relevant information is published on the school website and monitor that there is continuity of application throughout the school.	<b>D</b>
To review and agree the Child Protection Policy (including Cyber Bullying and e-safety strategies) on an annual basis. Monitor and evaluate implementation of the policy and report any concerns/ areas for improvement to the full trust board. (Safeguarding Portfolio Holder)	<b>D</b>
To meet with the SENDCO and work with them to analyse the impact of the schools' provision for SEND pupils in relation to attainment and progress; attendance, punctuality and exclusion.	<b>D</b>
Establish if the SENDCO has sufficient time and resources to enable them to carry out the role as described in the SEND Code of Practice? If your school shares a SENDCO across settings do they have sufficient administration support to enable them to fulfil their role effectively? (Note – The Code of Practice states it may be appropriate for smaller primary schools to share a SENDCO, but this must be kept under review to ensure there is no negative impact on outcomes or quality of provision.)	<b>R</b>
To support the SENDCO in completing the SEND Funding Evaluation Tool (autumn term) and check that the data matches the information held by the school. Use the SEND Funding Evaluation Tool to ensure that provision is being targeted effectively and consider the implications of the following year's budget for learners with SEND & inclusion needs. Ask how Graduated Response is used in school to support the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle.	<b>D</b>