

Local Governing Body Terms of Reference

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Introduction

The Governance Handbook issued by the Department for Education states:

All boards, no matter what type of schools or how many schools they govern, have three core functions:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;*
- 2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and*
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.*

The purpose of the local governing body is to ensure that they provide local direction for the school(s) within the framework of the trust governance Structure. This is a crucial delegated role that will ensure that both delegated policies are appropriately scrutinised and implemented at local level and that trust policies are implemented and appropriate feedback reported to the Board of Trustees and its committees.

The delegated responsibilities of the local governing body are laid out in detail within the trust scheme of delegation and master policy schedule. It is crucial that all members of the local governing body understand this delegated power and respect the authority of other parties in the approved scheme of delegation.

Further guidance on this area can be found in the [Governance handbook](#) issued by the DfE and also the [Competency framework for governance](#).

Membership and structure

Membership

It is not required for a trustee to be a member of the local governing body, although this is allowable.

As far as is possible the local governing body should be drawn from the local community at the same time as having the range of skills recommended in the [Governance Handbook and competency framework](#).

The membership of the local governing body must be of 9 members, including the following representatives:

- The Head of the school or an appropriately accountable executive officer

- 2 elected parents governors whose children currently attend the school
- 1 elected staff governor not including the Head
- 2 community governors drawn from the local community or with the skills to help the local governing body fulfil its purpose. These governors may be elected by the local governing body.
- 3 other governors which may be co-opted or community governors

The local governing body may appoint associate governors who may bring specific expertise to the governing body and where they will add benefit/contribution to discussions and the agenda.

The local governing body may invite staff colleagues to be in attendance at meetings where they will add benefit/contribution to discussions and the agenda (local governing body must make due consideration to staff workload).

The local governing body may invite pupil representatives to be in attendance at meetings where they will add benefit/contribution to discussions and the agenda.

Structure

With due regard to the above outlined structure; the local governing body structure should be clearly defined by the governing body and this should be documented and agreed by the governors.

Elections of governors should be open and transparent wherever possible, involving the largest constituency practical. For example parent and staff governors will be elected with the involvement of the constituency they represent (e.g. parents and staff). Governors may be co-opted on to a governing body where this is needed closing skills gaps.

All appointments and resignations or removals from the governing body should be recorded in the minutes of the governing body meeting, Get Information About Schools must be updated within 14 days of the meeting.

The local governing body is accountable to the Board of Trustees and reviews of effective and robust governance may be requested from time to time.

Membership responsibilities

Parent Governor

Parent governors play a vital role on the local governing body, holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. Through the children, they have a first-hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum, and how the school is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables parent governors to bring a different perspective to the strategic management of the school.

It is important for parent governors to establish a rapport with the parental body that elected him/her, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance. Although being available to advise parents on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that parent governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no governance representative has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

Parent governors are representative parents rather than representatives of parents.

To effectively fulfil the role, parent governors should:

- make themselves known to the parent body
- try to attend in-service training sessions
- listen impartially to concerns raised by parents
- guide parents regarding appropriate lines of action and procedures
- present a balanced view of issues, representing different sections of the parent community
- set up and operate a system of liaison with the Parent Teacher Association (or similar)

Staff Governor

Staff governors consist of the Headteacher, non-teaching staff and teaching staff – the position of the Headteacher being ‘ring-fenced’ (i.e. should the Headteacher choose not to be a governor no one else can fill the vacancy). The role is unique in that, by definition, staff are involved in the day-to-day running of the school and yet are asked as governors to put this to one side and be ‘strategic managers’.

The role of the staff governor offers an opportunity to make a real contribution to the strategic management of the school, providing an interesting and rewarding dimension to work.

It is important for staff governors to establish a rapport with the body that elected him/her, whilst continuing to maintain the strategic approach to school governance. Although being available to advise staff on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that staff governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no governance representative has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

To effectively fulfil the role, staff governors:

- have equal rights with all other governors
- should not participate in discussions where they have a personal interest in the outcome
- should not participate in discussions about colleagues' pay (NB this does not apply to the Headteacher who should be involved in discussions about staff pay, but not about his/her own pay)
- follow the agreed procedure for putting items on the agenda
- should feel free to express their own personal views, it being recognised that this is not necessarily the view of the majority of staff
- do not have a mandate to express any views other than their own. However, they should report in good faith any widely held staff views, even if in a vote they decide to vote differently
- try to attend in-service training sessions
- should agree with the rest of the governing body how decisions can be shared with staff (not what was actually said) unless the matter is deemed confidential
- should be aware of the sensitivity of governing body meeting discussions and clarify after such discussions which items can be reported and which items the governing body wish to remain unreported until the minutes of the meeting have been confirmed
- Should set up and operate a system of liaison with the teaching and non-teaching staff

Community Governor

A community governor is a person appointed by the governing body and who, in the opinion of the governing body, has the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

It is important for community governors to establish a rapport with the local community, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance. It is vital that community governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns, and in relation to the pupils of the school, follow the guidance and processes in place.

To effectively fulfil the role, community governors should:

- make themselves known to the wider community, including the pupil community and geographically local community
- try to attend in-service training sessions
- listen impartially to concerns raised by pupils and the community

- guide the community regarding appropriate lines of action and procedures
- present a balanced view of issues, representing different sections of the pupil and local community
- Set up and operate a system of liaison with the School Council (or similar)

Associate Governors

Associate governors can be appointed to serve on the local governing body. They may also attend full governing body meetings.

They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in governing body decisions, or be part of quorum.

Associate governors should be appointed because of the specific expertise and experience they can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Subject to the disqualifications set out in the 2012 Constitution Regulations, the governing body may appoint a pupil, school staff member, or any other person as an associate governor so that they can contribute their specific expertise. This can help to address specific gaps identified in the skills of governing body members, and/or help the governing body respond to particular challenges that they may be facing.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the governing Body shall be 50% or more of the governors appointed (excluding vacancies) at the date of the meeting. Staff governors should not represent more than 33% of any vote on any matter.

Meetings

- The local governing body will meet at least once a term plus an annual general meeting.
- Two governors from the local governing body will also attend each of the Trust Board Development Groups (governors identified by the local governing body) at least twice a year.
- The Chair or a representative governor will attend trust individual school finance/budget setting reviews twice per year.
- All governors must commit to visits at the school twice a year
- The local governing body for all schools will attend the trust annual conference
- The Chair of Governors will meet at least once a term with the Chair of Trustees

The local governing body can informally hold meetings as required to discuss topics as they feel appropriate. These would be informal meetings and may be helpful to discuss any topics outside of these standard terms of reference.

The governing body will receive guidance from the Executive Team to the agenda topics at their structured termly meetings in order to satisfy the strategic work required by the Board of Trustees, enabling schools to meet the expected KPIs.

Communication with the Board of Trustees will be essential in order to ensure strong links between the Board of Trustees and the Local Governing Body.

The standard termly meetings of the local governing body will be minuted by a resource supplied from the trust collaborative team and actions tracked in order that local governing body and the trust have the necessary oversight to ensure effective governance. The local governing body, at their expense, would arrange the clerking of any additional informal meetings.

Terms of Reference

The local governing body is to provide support and challenge to the leadership of the Executive Officers in the school, and all facets of the school, responsible for the overall performance of the school and to hold them to account in relation to all aspects of performance.

This will have a particular focus on the requirements of The Mast Academy Trust with regard to its agreed scheme of delegation and the requirements of the [Academies Financial Handbook](#) and will cover all aspects of the three core functions described above.

Scope of Local Governing Body– Scheme of Delegation

The local governing body refers to scheme of delegation for the terms of reference relating to their function and activities:

- Admissions and marketing
- Academic performance
- Building and maintenance
- Curriculum
- Community, parents and carers
- CPD
- EYFS
- Finances
- Governance
- Handling Complaints
- HR management
- Health and Safety
- Information Management
- Ofsted/DFE Monitoring
- Quality of teaching
- Recruitment
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Strategic Planning
- Vision

Refer to Appendix A for specific details.

All governors have a duty to act honestly and in good faith, with a view to promoting the best interests of the school and the Mast Academy Trust.

The trustees may choose, from time to time and within the boundaries of the Department for Education guidance, to provide focus on particular elements of these Terms of Reference or ask for additional work to be carried out in order to ensure educational performance are governed most effectively.

Scope of LOCAL GOVERNING BODY – Policies

The Board of Trustees will ratify of policies approved by their committees. The policies will apply and be published across all schools in the trust once ratified. Policies that require adjustments to school specific detail must be reviewed by the local governing body before publishing.

The local governing body will review and approve all individual school specific policies.

Relationship with other committees

The local governing body should have strong links both with curriculum development group and the pastoral and wellbeing development group; the Chair of Governors should also maintain strong links with the Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees. It is therefore recommended that two representatives from the local governing body should be a member of the trust development groups mentioned to ensure joined up decision making and thinking.

The Board of Trustees must receive the reports from all local governing bodies to ensure that an appropriate response to local governing body needs can be given and that strategic oversight is maintained across the trust. Due regard should be given for the work of each trust committees as well as feedback from school.

Terms of Reference review

These Terms of Reference should be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum by the Board of Trustees. Executive Officers will be expected to liaise with the local governing body and keep up to date with statutory and other changes on an ongoing basis in order to ensure trustees and governors are kept well informed of such changes and their impact on these terms of reference.

APPENDIX A: Scheme of Delegation for the local governing Body.

The roles of the key stakeholders and their responsibilities to the local governing body as identified by the Scheme of Delegation.

Executive Team
Responsible
Community, parents, carers
Support and advise when requested.
Governing Body
Accountable
Community, parents, carers
Know and understand the school's links with the community, parents & carers and ensuring strong relationships at all levels
Curriculum
Adhere to the principles on which the school's qualifications and curriculum policies are based in line with guidance as prepared by the DfE.
Governance
Ensure its own processes are line with the legal requirements as set down in the Articles of Association, the Master and Supplementary Funding Agreement.
Consulted
HR management
When invited to do so by the CEO/Board; contribute to the performance management of the Headteacher.
Recruitment
As invited to do so; contribute to the appointment of the Headteacher.
When invited to do so (and would be expected in the case of senior leadership posts); support the Headteacher by joining appointment panels or otherwise contribute to the appointment process.
Strategic Planning
Together with the Headteacher; oversee the development and regular updating of the school's improvement plan (SIP).
Finance
Contribute their views in relation to the final budget.
Propose capital plan
Informed
Building and Maintenance
Receive summary maintenance plans in order to understand any planned capital works and the impact of the strategic plan on the quality of the school buildings.
CPD
Receive professional development and training summary reports from the Headteacher in order to ensure the GB is fully aware of the school's activity in this area and can support and challenge appropriately.
Governance
The decision by the Trust Board on Governor removal appeals
Handling Complaints

Receive annual reports on all complaints.
Health and Safety
Receive regular summary health and safety reports (including copies of the professional health and safety audits) from the Headteacher in order to ensure the GB is fully aware of the school's activity in this area and can support and challenge appropriately.
HR management
Receive reports from the Headteacher in relation to the performance management of all staff in order to ensure the GB is fully aware of the school's activity in this area and can support and challenge appropriately.
Ofsted/DFE Monitoring
Understand the requirements of inspection process and supports the Headteacher in being 'inspection ready'.
Recruitment
Use key performance data provided by the school is fully aware of the school's activity in terms of its staff, staffing structures and more general HR data and can support and challenge appropriately.
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Receive summary reports including child protection, exclusions, attendance, behaviour in order to ensure the GB is fully aware of the school's activity in this area and can support and challenge appropriately.
Finance
Approved spending within schools over £10K outside of the budget
Responsible
Academic Performance
Appoint a GB member with responsibility for SEN and Disability and that they ensure the GB knows and understands the achievement and learning of different groups of students.
Comply with the Local Authority in relation to 'Local Offer' for students.
Ensure the school has a SEND Policy that is reviewed annually.
Know and understand the school's response to the recommendations of the last inspection and any significant changes in the quality of education or care.
Know, understand and challenge the overall quality of students' achievements and learning (achievement, attainment, progress, attitudes).
Support the school in its self-evaluation of significant strengths or weaknesses (academic and other achievements, personal development, and governance, leadership and management)
Admissions and Marketing
Ensure that the school complies with admission appeals.
Provide support, challenge, advice and encouragement in the area of marketing.
Building and Maintenance
Although not itself responsible for capital expenditure decisions, together with the Headteacher; the GB develop priorities for capital expenditure and large scale 'minor works' in line with the strategic plan.
Community, parents, carers
Support, challenge and advise the school as it seeks to improve and enhance these links.
Curriculum
Know and understand the school's own evaluation of the quality of its curricular and extra-curricular provision.

Know and understand the school's own evaluation of the quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.
Support, challenge and advise the school in the development and implementation of its curriculum and qualifications framework and its extra-curricular provision.
EYFS
Appoint a member of the GB who has a specific responsibility for the oversight of EYFS and meets regularly with the EYFS Co-ordinator.
Know and understand the school's own evaluation of the quality of EYFS provision.
Governance
Appoint the chair and vice chair from amongst their membership annually
Evaluate its own processes and effectiveness.
Own training and new member induction.
Removal of a governor only when approved by the Trust Board
Represents the GB when required on Trust wide boards and/or groups
Succession planning and the recruitment of GB members to ensure an appropriate balance of skills and effectiveness.
Represent on the Trust development group as identified by the Trust Governance structure and terms of reference(s)
Ensure the constitution of the governing body meets with the DfE competency framework for governance, as a whole and the identified 'someone on the board'
Health and Safety
Appoint a member of the GB who has a specific responsibility for ensuring the GB is fully briefed on health and safety in the school and attends regular training sessions.
Know and understand the Mast Academy schools risk management framework and maintain a risk register as advised by the Trust.
HR management
Has the authority to dismiss staff other than Senior Leaders in line with Trust policy
Participate in hearings and appeals as part of the pay, grievance, capability or disciplinary process.
Information Management
Ensure Information technology has the appropriate cyber security protection
Ensure systems comply with Information management legislation with relation to students, parents/carers, staff and the wider community.
Ensure the effective implementation of the data protection policies and procedures in the school.
Ofsted/DFE Monitoring
Engage fully with the inspection process.
Quality of teaching
Know and understand the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching.
With the CEO; support and challenge the school in its programme of improvement.
Recruitment
Know and understand the training requirements for safer recruitment including members' own training if taking part in recruitment processes.
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Appoint a member of the GB who has a specific responsibility for ensuring the GB is fully briefed on safeguarding and child protection in the school and undertakes safer recruitment training.
Ensure underperformance is challenged at school level
Undertake annual training as requested by the Executive team

Strategic Planning
Acting as a critical friend when scrutinising the self-evaluation.
Oversee the implementation of the Boards' strategic vision as it applies to the school.
Together with the Headteacher; develop the school's 3-5-year Strategic Plan (SDP) for approval by the Trust Board.
Vision
Ensure their school has a clear vision in place, which is regularly reviewed and communicated widely.
Together with the Headteacher; the Chair ensure the views of the GB are well communicated to the Trust Board.
Use the objective information they receive to be well informed about standards in school and progression towards the school's vision.
Finance
Together with the Headteacher; develop capital expenditure priorities against the schools' strategic plan for submission to the executive team and board.
Headteacher
Accountable
EYFS
Meet the welfare requirements set down in law
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Statutory compliance of safeguarding and child protection in the school
Responsible
Academic Performance
Accurate self-evaluation of the school, its strengths and weaknesses and for implementing a plan of action to address this.
Cooperates effectively with school to school support contracts identified for the school to bring about rapid and sustained improvements.
Has a detailed understanding of the overall quality of student's achievements and progress based on accurate evidence of individual student achievement and progress.
Knows what to do to improve academic performance and ensures appropriate action is taken in a timely, consistent and strategic way.
Liaise with the local authority in respect of students who have or might have SEND.
Specifically has a detailed understanding of the achievements and progress of different groups of students based on accurate evidence of individual student achievement and progress.
To designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision.
To make provisions for SEND students with or without a EHCP.
Admissions and Marketing
Contribute to and comply with any LA in year admission and fair access protocols.
Develop and implement the school's strategic marketing plan.
Implement the school's admissions policy and the appeals process.
Measure the success of the marketing plan through the agreed key performance indicators and, most particularly, through student numbers.
Building and Maintenance
Together with the GB and collaboration services; oversight of the PFI contract (where applicable).
Together with the GB; develop priorities for capital expenditure and large scale 'minor works' in line with the strategic plan.

With the professional support of the collaboration services is responsible for the maintenance of the school and its facilities.
Community, parents, carers
Develop effective links with the community, parents & carers.
CPD
Contribute to the Trust wide professional development and networks programme.
Design, develop, commission and deliver professional development programmes at school level.
Develop and implement the school's strategy for professional development.
Ensure induction and probation are highly effective for all staff.
Ensure the school is engrossed in talent management and supporting the SCITT.
Has a clear plan for succession planning for all key posts.
Curriculum
Development and implementation of the school's curriculum and qualifications framework.
Development and implementation of the school's extra-curricular provision.
Ensure statutory policies as outlined by the MAT are in place and implemented.
Ensure the curriculum allows students to progress to the next stage effectively.
Quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.
EYFS
Accurate self-evaluation of EYFS, its strengths and weaknesses and for implementing a plan of action to address this.
Governance
Act as a Governor on the GB.
Build an effective relationship with the Clerk.
Ensure GBs receive papers in advance of meetings (7 days in advance).
Ensure meetings are carried out in line with this SoD.
Handling Complaints
Deal with and respond to complaints at an informal and school level wherever possible.
Implement the Trust's policies with respect to handling of complaints.
Monitor statutory compliance in relation to complaints.
Refer complaints received directly by the school to the appropriate person.
Health and Safety
Ensure the GB is kept informed as to the group's risk management framework.
Health and safety in their school.
Implement recommendations from the professional health and safety audits.
Implement the Trust's health and safety policies, guidance and training in their school.
Implement the Trust's risk management framework.
HR management
Ensure all Staffing policies are implemented, including Equality Policy.
Has the authority to dismiss in line with Trust policy.
Implement the performance management programmes for all staff in the school.
To suspend/dismiss staff in consultation with the Executive Team.
Information Management
Ensure compliance with all Data Protection legislation and good practice in the school.
Ensure the publication of school information ensuring all electronic communication including websites are up to date.

Maintain accurate and secure staff records.
Maintain accurate and secure student's records.
Ofsted/DFE Monitoring
Communicate the outcomes of the inspection process with parents, carers and stakeholders.
Ensure the GB and all staff fully understand the requirements of the inspection process.
Ensure the school is 'inspection ready' at all times.
Notify the CEO of contact from the DfE/Ofsted asap.
Quality of teaching
Accurate self-evaluation of the quality of teaching, its strengths and weaknesses and for implementing action to address this.
Ensure external view / validation in terms of these judgments.
Quality of teaching in the school, ensuring consistent good or better teaching leads to high quality outcomes for all students.
Recruitment
Accuracy of the school's Single Central Record and statutory compliance with respect to training for safer recruitment.
Recruitment and appointment of all school staff other than the Headteacher, in line with Trust policies.
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Ensure a fully trained DSL is in place.
Ensure all staff receive annual training in line with statutory responsibilities.
Ensure that a named person for Looked After Children is in place.
Ensure that the school responds to local and national need/priorities.
Ensure timely completion of all audits relating to safeguarding.
Implementation of safeguarding and child protection policies and best practices within the school
Provide reports for the GB.
Strategic Planning
Implement the 5-year strategic plan and the annual school Improvement Plan (SIP).
Together with the GB; develop the school's 5-year Strategic Plan for approval by the Trust Board.
Together with the GB; develop the school's annual Improvement/Development Plan (SIP).
Write the annual self-evaluation.
Vision
Implement the school vision as determined by the GB.
Together with the GB Chair; ensure the views of the GB are well communicated to the Trust Board.
Together with the GB Chair; ensure GB members have all the information they require to be well informed about both the school and Mast Academy schools.
Finance
Together with the GB; develop capital expenditure priorities against the school's strategic plan for submission to the executive and board.