

Role of the Local Academy Board

Consilium is a Multi-Academy Trust with a family of nine schools across the north of England. For each school a Local Academy Board (LAB) has been established. LABs are a formal and important part of the governance of Consilium Academies and the contributions of members are very much valued by the Trust Board. Each LAB is composed of different members, two of which are elected by parents and carers of children on roll at the school. Parent members are elected through a process which is defined in a key document called the Articles of Association. Two further members of the LAB are appointed by staff within the school, and the remaining members (including the Chair) are appointed by the Trust Board.

Parent LAB members play an important role and a key function of the LAB is to engage meaningfully with all parents and carers as a whole.

The Trust Board determines the level of delegation or responsibility which is to be passed to the LABs. Some of the typical areas which are covered at local level may be;

- Support of the efficient and effective operation of the Trust and its policies
- Support and challenge (where appropriate) to the school leaders, particularly around issues related to school performance, pastoral care and the safeguarding of pupils
- Share issues and risks with the Trust Board if necessary
- Scrutiny of reports which may be supplied by school leaders or members themselves
- Provide a meaningful link with the community, parents and the students of the school, sharing feedback with the LAB, regarding challenges but also to celebrate successes
- Provide feedback to the Trust Board in relation to policies and practices which are bespoke to the school.

If it is determined that an academy requires further support to drive improvements, a School Improvement Board (SIB) is established.

Role of the School Improvement Board

The Trust Board is ultimately responsible for school improvement, but the majority of this oversight is provided by the Performance Committee who hold Trust Leaders to account for improvements in school performance. Responsibility for school improvement is then delegated from the Performance Committee to the School Improvement Board (SIB), which is a sub-committee of the LAB.

SIBs have proven to be a very effective forum for holding leaders to account for school improvement since their instigation, because of the specialist skills and expertise of the members. As such the Trust Board recognised that they should be part of the formal governance structure and be the body to whom responsibility for school improvement is delegated.

The frequency of SIB meetings is dependent on the level of support required by the academy. In most schools, meetings will take place either termly (three times per year) or half-termly (six times per year).

The membership of the SIB is composed of:

- A member of the Trust's School Improvement Team not involved in the leadership of the school (this person will also Chair the SIB)
- The LAB Chair
- At least two further LAB members (though others can also attend if they wish)
- Two senior leaders from other schools within the Trust
- A representative from the Local Authority

Where leadership and management is considered to be effective, the role of the SIB is assumed by the LAB.

Role of the Trust Board

Trust Boards are a formal and important part of the governance of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and are a statutory requirement. As charitable companies, all MATs have Articles of Association. Compliance with the Articles of Association is a condition of the Trust's funding agreement. The composition of the Trust Board and the responsibilities of a Trustee are stipulated within the Articles of Association.

Trustees are both company Directors and charity Trustees, as academies have the legal status of both company and charitable Trust. Trustees have more specific responsibilities than LAB members which include ultimate responsibility for management of Trust finances. In a Trust, the Trust Board are the accountable body and must ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

The Trust Board at Consilium Academies may have up to ten Trustees, appointed by the Members. The key functions of the Board are:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its students and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

The Board's role is strategic, not operational. Strategic responsibilities may include:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the Trust
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- deciding on the principles that guide Trust policies and approving statutory policies
- appointing and appraising the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and making pay recommendations
- ensuring that stakeholders are involved, consulted and informed of initiatives as appropriate
- ensuring that all schools in the Trust deliver a broad and balanced curriculum such that students are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- taking ownership of the Trust's financial sustainability and ensuring effective resource management across the Trust
- overseeing the Trust's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management policy and procedures are in place, and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective
- determine Schemes of Delegation and any other local governance arrangements

Once priorities have been determined and agreed, they are monitored by the Trust Board to review progress. There are a number of ways this can be established:

- measure impact and progress towards strategic objectives
- ensure the required policies and procedures are in place and monitor how the Trust is operating effectively in line with these policies
- hold the CEO to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies
- evaluate relevant data and feedback provided by Executive Leaders and external reports on all aspects of Trust performance
- ask challenging questions of the Executive Leaders in order to hold them to account
- review governance arrangements against set objectives

Trustees are usually appointed based on their skills set and/or experience which has been identified as being of importance and pertinent to the needs of the Trust. They are required to commit to attending meetings of the Board and committees, of which they may also be members, dependent on their experience.

Terms of Reference Of the Local Academy Board

1. Membership

1.1 The LAB shall comprise at least three members, though the target constitution is as follows:

- Chair, appointed by the Trust Board
- Four other members appointed by the Trust
- Two parent members
- Two staff members

1.2 Appointments to the Board are for a period of four years.

1.3 The Trust Board shall appoint the committee Chair. In the absence of the appointed chair and/or an appointed deputy at a committee meeting, the remaining members present shall elect one of their number to chair the meeting. The Head teacher may not chair the meeting.

2. Secretary

The Clerk to the Trust Board shall arrange for a suitable member of staff from the school to act as the secretary of the Board who will ensure that the committee receives information and papers in a timely manner to enable full and proper consideration to be given to the issues.

3. Quorum

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be two members of the Board.

4. Frequency of meetings

The Local Academy Board shall meet at least three times each year and otherwise as required, at appropriate intervals in the school's annual cycle.

Meetings may take place virtually using a video conferencing platform as determined by the Board.

5. Notice of meetings

5.1 Meetings shall be called by the secretary of the Board at the request of the chair

or any of its members.

- 5.2 Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the Board and any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent to members and to other attendees, as appropriate, at the same time.

6. Minutes of meetings

- 6.1 The secretary shall minute the proceedings and resolutions of all meetings, including the names of those present and in attendance.
- 6.2 Draft minutes of meetings shall be circulated to all members of the Board.

7. Engagement with members and other stakeholders

Members of the Local Academy Board who also sit on the School Improvement Board will provide feedback to that Board on the key discussions and outcomes of the meeting. In addition, the minutes of Local Academy Board meetings will be provided to the Trust Board for review.

8. Duties

The Board shall:

- 8.1 Be the Trust's local point of consultation and review on matters such as policy, vision and strategy.
- 8.2 Contribute to the vision and ethos of the School, ensuring the School is contributing to the delivery of the mission and vision of the Trust, as set out in the Consilium Charter.
- 8.3 Have oversight of health and safety within the School, reporting any concerns to the Trust's competent person.
- 8.4 Consider the impact of the Trust's central team on providing effective support to the School, and provide any feedback to the Head of Governance and Compliance.
- 8.5 Receive and consider a report from the Headteacher at each meeting which provides an overview of the School's progress in addressing its key objectives.

- 8.6 Ensure systems are in place to regularly gather feedback from parents, students and staff, and that this feedback is utilised to consider opportunities for further improvement. Ensure that Trustees and the CEO are aware of parents' and community views.
- 8.7 Consider the feedback from the School Improvement Board regarding the progress of the School and ensure this is triangulated by the experience of all stakeholders.
- 8.8 Provide an effective link between the School and its local community, supporting strategies to improve parental and community engagement, including receiving and challenging reports from the school on community engagement work.
- 8.9 Receive reports on the extra-curricular provision on offer to pupils, ensuring that the ambitions set out within the Consilium Charter are met.
- 8.10 Identify and support opportunities for income generation in order to support enhancements to the School's offer for its pupils.
- 8.11 Contribute to the Trust's work on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, monitoring the effectiveness of strategies implemented and making recommendations to the Trust of ways this can be enhanced further.
- 8.12 Have oversight of the wellbeing of staff within the School, ensuring that staff feel well supported.
- 8.13 Have oversight of the School's approach to primary liaison and student recruitment, focusing on increasing the number of parents choosing the School as their first choice.
- 8.14 Highlight to the Trust Board (through the Clerk to the Trust Board) any matters it considers necessary to ensure the effective operation of the School.
- 8.15 To agree and have oversight of the implementation of all policies delegated to the Local Academy Board by the Trust Board, ensuring effective consultation with key stakeholders.
- 8.16 Convene panels to deal with complaints and exclusion, as required by the relevant policies, including supporting HR panels as required.
- 8.17 Act as an ambassador for the Trust, celebrating its work and promoting

the benefits of working within a collaborative organisation.

- 8.18 Conduct an annual self-review of the effectiveness of local governance at the School and provide this review to the Trust.

9. Reporting responsibilities

- 9.1 The chair shall report to the Trust Board after each meeting on the nature and content of its discussion, recommendations and action to be taken by promptly providing a draft copy of the minutes.
- 9.2 The Local Academy Board shall make whatever recommendations to the Trust Board it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed, and adequate time should be available for board discussion when necessary.

10. Other matters

The Board shall:

- 10.1 Have access to sufficient resources in order to carry out its duties, including access to the MAT's governance function and legal advice service level agreement for advice and assistance as required.
- 10.2 Be provided with appropriate and timely training, both in the form of an induction programme for new members and on an ongoing basis for all members of the Board.
- 10.3 Give due consideration to all relevant laws and regulations, the provisions of DfE and ESFA guidance, including the funding agreement, as appropriate.
- 10.4 Ensure that a periodic evaluation of the Board's own performance is carried out.
- 10.5 At least annually, review its terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Trust Board for approval.

11. Authority

The Local Academy Board is authorised by the Trust Board to:



- 11.1 Seek any information it requires from any employee of the Trust in order to perform its duties.
- 11.2 Obtain, at the MAT's expense, outside legal or other professional advice on any matters within its terms of reference, subject to liaison with the Chief Executive.

12. Review

These terms of reference are approved by the Trust board and are subject to their review and amendment annually and when necessary.

Date of approval

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Date of next review

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