



# STEP Academy Trust Scheme of Delegation

## Key points and Summary

This document outlines:

The requirements of the Articles of Association regarding delegation

The principles of decision making within STEP Academy Trust

The scheme of delegation within STEP Academy Trust

The respective roles of Members, Trustees, Executive Team, Strategic Governing Bodies and Academy Leadership Teams

The meetings of the Strategic Governing Bodies

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Approved: Autumn 2017

Review: Summer 2018

Responsibility for review: Board of Trustees

## **1. Introduction and Statement of Intent**

As a charity and company limited by guarantee, STEP Academy Trust (“the Trust”) is governed by a Board of Trustees (the “Trustee” or “Trustees”) who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Trust and the academies run by the Trust. This Scheme of Delegation will apply to all academies for which the Trust is responsible (the “Academies”). Any reference to “the Academies” in this Scheme of Delegation refers to all Academies within the Trust.

The Trustees are accountable to external government agencies including the Charity Commission, Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Education (including any successor bodies) for the quality of the education they provide and they are required to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of quality, safety and good practice.

In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Trustees appoint people to serve on a board (the “Strategic Governing Body” or “SGB”) which has been established to ensure the good governance of the Academies.

This Scheme of Delegation explains the ways in which the Trustees fulfil their responsibilities for the leadership and management of the Academies, the respective roles and responsibilities of the Trustees and the members of the Strategic Governing Body and the commitments to each other to ensure the success of STEP Academy Trust.

This Scheme of Delegation has been put in place by the Trustees from the Effective Date in accordance with the provisions of the Trust’s Articles of Association (“the Articles”)

## **2. Ethos and Mission Statement**

1.1 STEP Academy Trust’s mission is as follows:

At STEP Academy Trust we are committed to improving the life chances of all children. Where we have the capacity to make a difference, we are morally bound to do so. Members of the Trust strive together for excellence in partnership, so that our children, staff and Academy communities benefit from excellent teaching, learning and leadership.

The Trustees and Strategic Governing Bodies recognise their responsibility towards the common good, not just of the Academies for whom the Trust is responsible, but of all of the families and communities in the areas served by the Academies.

1.2 STEP Academy Trust is governed by:

- Members – guardians of STEP Academy Trust, their role is similar to that of shareholders of a limited company
- Trustees – appointed by Trustees to oversee the business of STEP, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance
- Executive Team – manage the day to day business of the Trust in line with policies approved by Trustees

- Strategic Governing Body – provide challenge and support to Academy Leadership Teams as the Academy implements policies and improvement plan priorities
- Academy Leadership Team – manage the day to day business of an individual academy under the oversight of the Executive Team with challenge and support from the Strategic Governing Body

## **2. Scope and Applicability**

This Scheme of Delegation outlines the framework for decision making within STEP Academy Trust. It applies to all Members, Trustees, Governors serving on the SGBs and staff.

To aid decision making, a “Decision Matrix” is attached at Appendix 1.

## **3. Articles of Association**

The following are the relevant clauses from the Articles of Association that outline what can, and cannot, be delegated.

3.1 Subject to provisions of the Companies Act 2006, the Articles and to any directions given by special resolution, the business of the Trust shall be managed by the Trustees, who may exercise all the powers of the Trust.

3.2 Subject to the Articles, Trustees:

- will appoint separate committees to be known as Strategic Governing Bodies to govern one or more Academies; and
- will establish other committees to ensure quality assurance and to enable the Trust to focus on strategic development.

3.3 Subject to the Articles, the constitution, membership and proceedings of any committee shall be determined by the Trustees. The establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the Trustees shall be reviewed at least once in every twelve months.

3.4 The membership of any committee of the Trustees may include persons who are not Trustees, provided that (with the exception of the Strategic Governing Bodies) a majority of members of any such committee shall be Trustees. Except in the case of a Strategic Governing Body, (SGB), no vote on any matter shall be taken at a meeting of a committee of the Trustees unless the majority of members of the committee present are Trustees.

3.5 Trustees may delegate to any Trustee, committee (including any SGB), the CEO or any other holder of an executive office, such of their powers or functions as they consider desirable to be exercised by them. Any such delegation shall be made subject to any conditions the Trustees may impose, and may be revoked or altered.

3.6 The implementation and impact of functions delegated to the SGBs will be quality assured by the STEP Standards Committee and the STEP Operations/Audit Committee.

3.7 Trustees shall appoint the Headteachers of the Academies and may delegate such powers and functions as they consider are required by the Headteachers for the internal organisation, management and control of the Academies (including the implementation of all policies approved by the Trustees and for the direction of the teaching and curriculum at the Academies).

3.8 The Board of Trustees cannot delegate any functions relating to the:

- constitution of the Trust;
- appointment or removal of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Trustees;
- suspension or removal of Trustees;
- delegation of functions, ie the adoption or revision of this Scheme of Delegation;
- establishment of committees;
- dissolution of committees.

#### **4. Members**

4.1 The Trust will have:

- 4 external Members (ie not Trustees)
- 1 internal Members (Chair of Trustees)

4.2 Members are the guardians of the Trust's constitution, determining the governance structure of the Trust and providing oversight and challenge of the Trustees to ensure the charitable object of the Trust is being fulfilled.

4.3 Members may agree to appoint/remove additional Members. The CEO is not required to be a Member as employees of the Trust cannot be Members. Members can appoint and remove any Trustee subject to the provisions outlined in the Articles of Association. Trustee appointments will be ratified by Members. Any removal by the Board of a Trustee appointed by the Members shall only be undertaken with the consent of the Members.

4.4 Members will be able to sign off the Annual Report and Accounts, however this will be delegated to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

#### **5. Board of Trustees**

5.1 The Board of Trustees (or Trust Board) is able to exercise all of the powers of STEP Academy Trust. It is responsible for the performance of the Trust.

5.2 The Board will offer support, constructive advice, a sounding board for ideas, a second opinion on proposals and help where needed, but will also challenge, ask questions, seek information, improve proposals and so seek to arrive at the best outcome for the Trust.

5.3 As trustees of a charity (the Trust), Trustees have a fiduciary duty to act in good faith in the best interests of the Trust. This duty includes a responsibility to do the following:

- ensure compliance with any legal obligations;
- report on the Trust's activities (the Trust must prepare accounts in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities, the so called "Charity SORP" and any reporting requirements of the Education & Skills Funding Agency);

- fulfil the charitable object of the Trust as set out in its constitution (ie the Articles of Association) and to act in a way which is compliant with the rules of the Trust contained in the Articles;
- act with integrity and to avoid any personal conflicts of interest and not to misuse any charity funds or assets;
- act prudently in the financial management of the Trust, avoiding putting any assets, funds or reputation of the Trust at undue risk;
- exercise reasonable care and skill, using personal knowledge and experience to ensure the Trust is well run and efficient; and
- act responsibly, getting advice from others, including professional advisors, where appropriate.

5.4 Subject to any change in policy from time to time or where circumstances merit a different approach, the Trust Board will be constituted as follows:

- Non-Executive Trustees;
- 1 Executive Trustee (usually the CEO)
- Associate Trustees (ie advisers to the Board).

5.5 The Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Trustees is set out in Appendix 2. Specific skills may be needed if a Trustee is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area, or to undertake the role of the Chair of the Trust. A regular skills audit will be undertaken and Trustees should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Trust and the Academies.

Detailed terms of reference for the Trust Board are attached as Appendix 3.

## **6. Committees**

6.1 The Trust Board will establish a structure of committees as appropriate. These committees will act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Trustees except where powers have been specifically delegated to them by the Trust Board.

6.2 The Trust Board will establish the following committees:

- Operations/Audit Committee;
- Standards Committee;
- Strategic Governing Bodies.

### **6.3 Strategic Governing Bodies**

6.3.1 Strategic Governing Body for each academy or pair of academies as follows:

- Angel Oak Academy and David Livingstone Academy;
- Applegarth Academy and Wolsey Academies;
- Gonville Academy;
- La Fontaine Academy and Heathfield Academy;
- Breakwater Academy and High Cliff Academy;
- Burfield Academy and Hawkes Farm Academy;
- Phoenix Academy and White House Academy.

6.3.2 When the Trust Board deems that there are sufficient Governors in place to ensure the committees are effective, there will be Lead Governors in each of the following areas:

- Safeguarding;
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- SEND;
- Pupil Premium;
- Finance and Operations ;
- Headteacher Performance Management;
- Standards;
- Additional areas as applicable

Role Descriptions for Lead Governors are outlined in the Lead Governor Booklet at Appendix 8.

6.3.3 In order to be functional, the composition of any SGB responsible for two academies within STEP Academy Trust must meet the following minimum criteria:

- 2 Headteacher Governors, ex-officio (one from each Academy);
- 2 Staff Governors (1 from each Academy, elected by members of staff);
- 2 Parent Governors (1 from each Academy, elected by parents/carers or appointed by the SGB where no-one has stood for election);
- 3 Co-opted Governors (ie appointed by the SGB).

6.3.4 The maximum membership of the SGB will be:

- 2 Headteacher Governors, ex-officio (one from each Academy);
- 2 Staff Governors (1 from each Academy);
- 2 Parent Governors (1 from each Academy, elected by parents/carers or appointed by the SGB where no-one has stood for election);
- 6 Co-opted Governors.

6.3.5 Where an Academy has a leadership model in excess of one Headteacher, for example two part-time Headteachers or an Executive Headteacher and Head of School, both members of staff will be members of the SGB. However, they will only have a single vote.

6.3.6 Where an SGB covers just one academy, the minimum membership will be:

- 1 Headteacher Governor;
- 1 Staff Governor;
- 1 Parent Governor;
- 3 Co-opted Governors (ie appointed by the SGB).

6.3.7 Any SGB may appoint Associate Governors, subject to the approval of the Trustees. Associate Governors will have no voting rights and their term of office will be limited to one year. The purpose of the role will be to provide short-term support in areas where the SGB identifies a need for development.

6.3.8 It would be usual for the SGB to invite members of the Executive Team to meetings. This will ensure that there continues to be open and transparent communication throughout the Trust.

6.3.9 The Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Governors is set out in Appendix 5. Specific skills may be needed if an individual is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area, or to undertake the role of the Chair of the

Strategic Governing Body (additional role responsibilities are set out in the appended Job Description). A regular skills audit will be undertaken and Governors should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Trust and the Academies for which they are responsible.

Detailed terms of reference for the Strategic Governing Body are attached as Appendix 6.

## **7. Academy Leadership Team**

7.1 The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of their Academy, for advising on and implementing the Trust's strategic framework, for the implementation of all policies approved by the Trustees for the direction of the teaching and the curriculum at the Academy.

7.2 In line with models provided, the Headteacher will contextualise aims, objectives and policies for the SGB and Board to consider, and will report to the SGB on progress at each meeting in accordance with a schedule drawn up annually with the Chair of the SGB. The Headteacher will work closely with the senior management team to this end.

7.3 The Headteacher and staff are accountable to the STEP Trust Board and to the SGB for the Academy's performance. The SGB and the Trustees will be prepared to explain its decisions and actions to anyone who has a legitimate interest. This may include staff, pupils and parents as well as the Secretary of State, Education and Skills Funding Agency ("ESFA") and Local Authority.

7.4 The Headteacher will comply with any reasonable direction by the Trust Board or SGB when acting on the Trust's behalf.

7.5 The Headteacher will agree and monitor appropriate delegations of authority with other staff.

## **8. Term of Office**

The term of office for any person serving on the Strategic Governing Body shall be 4 years, save that this time limit shall not apply to the CEO, Executive Headteacher (or any Headteacher serving in an ex officio capacity), who will serve for as long as he or she remains in office and persons who are Associate Governors who shall serve for 1 year - subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Governor, any person may be re-appointed to re-elected (including being "Co-opted" again) to the Strategic Governing Body.

## **9. Resignation and Removal**

9.1 A person serving on the Strategic Governing Body shall cease to hold office if he or she resigns his or her office by notice to the Strategic Governing Body (but only if at least three persons will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect).

9.2 A person serving on the Strategic Governing Body shall cease to hold office if he is removed by the person or persons who appointed him. Whilst at the same time as acknowledging that no reasons need to be given for the removal of a person who serves on the Strategic Governing Body by a person or persons who appointed him, any failure to uphold the values of the Trust and/or the Academies or to act in a way which is appropriate in light of this Scheme of Delegation or to comply with the role responsibilities set out in the "Job Description and Person Specification" will be taken

into account. A person may also be removed by the Trustees but only after the Trustees have given due regard to any representations by the Strategic Governing Body. The removal of a Parent Governor will be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances.

9.3 If any person who serves on the Strategic Governing Body in his or her capacity as an employee at any of the Academies ceases to work at the Academy, then he or she shall be deemed to have resigned and shall cease to serve on the Strategic Governing Body automatically on termination of his or her work at the Academy.

9.4 Where a person who serves on the Strategic Governing Body resigns his or her office or is removed from office, that person or, where he or she is removed from office, those removing him or her, shall give written notice thereof to the Clerk to the Strategic Governing Body who shall inform the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body, the Chair of Trustees and the Company Secretary.

## **10. Disqualification of members of the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body**

10.1 No person shall be qualified to serve on the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body unless he or she is aged 18 or over at the date of his or her election or appointment. No current pupil of the Academy shall be entitled to serve on the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body.

10.2 A person serving on the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body shall cease to hold office if:

- he or she becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing or administering his or her own affairs.
- he or she is absent without the permission of the Chair of the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body from all the meetings of the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body held within a period of six months and the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body resolves that his or her office be vacated.

10.3 A person shall be disqualified from serving on the Board of Trustees/Strategic Governing Body if:

- his or her estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- he or she is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order;
- at any time when he or she is subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Trustees Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order).
- he or she would cease to be a trustee/governor by virtue of any provision in the Companies Act 2006 or is disqualified from acting as a trustee/governor by virtue of section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).
- he or she has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which he or she was responsible

or to which he or she was privy, or which he or she by his or her conduct contributed to or facilitated.

- at any time when he or she is:
  - included in the list kept by the Secretary of State under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999; or
  - disqualified from working with children in accordance with Section 35 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000; or
  - barred from regulated activity relating to children (within the meaning of section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- he or she is a person in respect of whom a direction has been made under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or is subject to any prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction.
- where he or she has, at any time, been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of any offence which falls under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011.

10.4 After the Academy has opened, a person shall be disqualified from serving on the Strategic Governing Body if he or she has not provided to the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1977. In the event that the certificate discloses any information which would in the opinion of either the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body or the Headteacher confirm their unsuitability to work with children that person shall be disqualified. If a dispute arises as to whether a person shall be disqualified, a referral shall be made to the Chair of Trustees to determine the matter. The determination of the Chair of Trustees shall be final.

10.5 Where, by virtue of this Scheme of Delegation, a person becomes disqualified from serving on the Strategic Governing Body; and he or she was, or was proposed, to so serve, he or she shall upon becoming so disqualified give written notice of that fact to the Strategic Governing Body.

This clause shall also apply to any member of any committee of the Strategic Governing Body who is not a member of the Strategic Governing Body.

## **11. Annual Review**

11.1 This Scheme of Delegation shall operate from the Effective Date. The Trustees will have the absolute discretion to review this Scheme of Delegation at least on an annual basis and to alter any provisions of it.

11.2 In considering any material changes to this Scheme of Delegation or any framework on which it is based, the Trustees will have regard to and give due consideration of any views of the Strategic Governing Body.

## **12. Meetings of the Strategic Governing Body**

12.1 Subject to this Scheme of Delegation, the Strategic Governing Body may regulate its proceedings as the Executive Team deem suitable.

12.2 The Strategic Governing Body shall meet at least three times in every academic year. Meetings of the Strategic Governing Body shall be convened by the clerk to the Strategic Governing Body. In exercising his or her functions under this Scheme of Delegation the clerk shall comply with any direction:

- given by the Trustees or the Strategic Governing Body; or
- given by the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body or, in his or her absence or where there is a vacancy in the office of the Chair, the Vice-Chair of the Strategic Governing Body, so far as such direction is not inconsistent with any direction given as mentioned above.

12.3 Any three members of the Strategic Governing Body may, by notice in writing given to the Clerk, requisition a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body; and it shall be the duty of the Clerk to convene such a meeting as soon as is reasonably practicable. As this circumstance would be exceptional, the reasons for the Extra-Ordinary Meeting will be included in the opening remarks of the Chair at the meeting. If more than one Extra-Ordinary Meeting was requested in an academic year, the Governors requiring the second meeting would first discuss the matter with the Executive Team, who in turn would inform Trustees.

12.4 Each member of the Strategic Governing Body shall be given at least seven clear days before the date of a meeting:

- notice in writing thereof, signed by the Clerk, and sent to each member of the Strategic Governing Body at the address provided by each member from time to time; and
- a copy of the agenda for the meeting;

provided that where the Chair or, in his absence or where there is a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice-Chair, so determines on the ground that there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice of a meeting, and the copy of the agenda thereof are given within such shorter period as he directs.

12.4 The convening of a meeting and the proceedings conducted thereat shall not be invalidated by reason of any individual not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda thereof.

12.5 A resolution to rescind or vary a resolution carried at a previous meeting of the Strategic Governing Body shall not be proposed at a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body unless the consideration of the rescission or variation of the previous resolution is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.

12.6 A meeting of the Strategic Governing Body shall be terminated forthwith if:

- the members of the Strategic Governing Body so resolve; or
- the number of members present ceases to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body.

12.7 Where a meeting is not held or is terminated before all the matters specified as items of business on the agenda for the meeting have been disposed of, a further meeting shall be convened by the Clerk as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within seven days of the date on which the meeting was originally to be held or was so terminated.

12.8 Where the Strategic Governing Body resolves to adjourn a meeting before all the items of business on the agenda have been disposed of, the Strategic Governing Body shall before doing so determine the time and date at which a further meeting is to be held for the purposes of completing the consideration of those items, and they shall direct the Clerk to convene a meeting accordingly.

12.9 The quorum for a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be three Governors.

12.10 The Strategic Governing Body may act regardless of any vacancies on its board, but, if the numbers of persons serving is less than the number fixed as the quorum, the continuing persons may act only for the purpose of filling vacancies.

12.11 The quorum for the purposes of:

- any vote on the removal of a person in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation;
- any vote on the removal of the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body;
  - shall be any two-thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time persons entitled to vote on those respective matters and the CEO.

12.12 Subject to this Scheme of Delegation, every matter to be decided at a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the persons present and entitled to vote on the question. Every member of the Strategic Governing Body shall have one vote.

12.13 Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to any other vote he may have. The Chair will clearly state their reasons for the casting vote.

12.14 The proceedings of the Strategic Governing Body shall not be invalidated by:

- any vacancy on the SGB; or
- any defect in the election, appointment or nomination of any person serving on the SGB.

12.15 A resolution in writing, signed by all the persons entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body or of a subcommittee of the Strategic Governing Body, shall be valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body or (as the case may be) a subcommittee of the Strategic Governing Body duly convened and held. Such a resolution may consist of several documents in the same form, each signed by one or more of the members of the Strategic Governing Body and may include an electronic communication by or on behalf of the Strategic Governing Body indicating his or her agreement to the form of resolution providing that the member has previously notified the Strategic Governing Body in writing of the email address or addresses which the member will use.

12.16 The Strategic Governing Body shall ensure that a copy of:

- the agenda for every meeting of the Strategic Governing Body;
- the draft minutes of every such meeting, if they have been approved by the person acting as the Chair of that meeting;
- the signed minutes of every such meeting; and
- any report, document or other paper considered at any such meeting,

- are, as soon as is reasonably practicable, made available at each Academy to persons wishing to inspect them.

12.17 There may be excluded from any item required to be made available, any material relating to:

- a named teacher or other person employed, or proposed to be employed, at the Academy;
- a named pupil at, or candidate for admission to, the Academy; and
- any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Strategic Governing Body is satisfied should remain confidential.

12.18 Any member of the Strategic Governing Body shall be able to participate in meetings of the Strategic Governing Body by telephone or video conference provided that:

- he or she has given notice of his or her intention to do so detailing the telephone number on which he or she can be reached and/or appropriate details of the video conference suite from which he or she shall be taking part at the time of the meeting at least 48 hours before the meeting; and
- the Strategic Governing Body has access to the appropriate equipment, and
- if after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

### **13. Notices**

13.1 Any notice to be given to or by any person pursuant to this Scheme of Delegation (other than a notice calling a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body) shall be in writing or shall be given using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified for that purpose to the person giving the notice. In this Scheme of Delegation, "Address" in relation to electronic communications, includes a number or address used for the purposes of such communications.

13.2 A notice may be given by the Strategic Governing Body to its members either personally or by sending it by post in a prepaid envelope addressed to the member at his registered address or by leaving it at that address or by giving it using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified to the Strategic Governing Body by the member. A member whose registered address is not within the United Kingdom and who gives to the Strategic Governing Body an address within the United Kingdom at which notices may be given to him or her, or an address to which notices may be sent using electronic communications, shall be entitled to have notices given to him or her at that address, but otherwise no such member shall be entitled to receive any notice from the Strategic Governing Body.

13.3 A member of the Strategic Governing Body present, either in person or by proxy, at any meeting of the Strategic Governing Body shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and, where necessary, of the purposes for which it was called.

13.4 Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Proof that a notice contained in an electronic communication was sent in accordance with guidance issued by the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. A notice shall be deemed to be given at the expiration of 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted or, in the case of a notice contained in an electronic communication, at the expiration of 48 hours after the time it was sent.

## **14. Indemnity**

Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 every member of the Strategic Governing Body or other officer or auditor of the Company acting in relation to the Academy shall be indemnified out of the assets of the Company against any liability incurred by him or her in that capacity in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in favour or in which he or she is acquitted or in connection with any application in which relief is granted to him or her by the court from liability for negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust in relation to the affairs of the Company.

## **15. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Decision Matrix and Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Job Description and Role Responsibilities of a Trustee

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees

Appendix 4: Job Description and Role Responsibilities of a Governor

Appendix 5: Terms of Reference for the Strategic Governing Body

Appendix 6: Committee Terms of Reference - STEP Audit Committee

Appendix 7: Committee Terms of Reference – STEP Standards Committee

Appendix 8: Lead Governor Booklet

## APPENDIX 1 DECISION MAKING MATRIX

Strategy X = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
Appointing and removing Members							✓
Appointing Trustees						✓	
Removing Members and Trustees							✓
Setting the values, vision and strategic aims for the Trust						✓	
Contextualising the vision for each academy	X	✓					
Establishing the Scheme of Financial delegation for each Academy		X		✓			
Appointing and removing Chairs of SGBs						✓	
Appointing and removing the Clerk to the Board						✓	
Electing Chairs of SGBs		X				✓	
Appointing and removing the Clerk to the SGB		X				✓	
Appointing and removing Co-opted Trustees						✓	
Appointing and removing Co-opted Governors		X				✓	
Deciding the committee structure for the Board						✓	
Deciding the sub committee structure for SGBs						✓	
Agreeing Terms of Reference for all committees and reviewing annually						✓	
Developing a format for each Academy's AIP			✓				
Approving each Academy's AIP						✓	
Creating the AIP for each Academy	✓						
Approving the AIP for each Academy		✓					
Developing a format for each Academy's SEF			✓				
Approving each Academy's SEF					✓		
Developing a format for Headteacher's Reports			✓				

Strategy X = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
Reviewing and challenging the Headteacher's Report		✓					
Planning the schedule of work for the Board				X	X	✓	
Providing a model schedule of work for SGBs				X	X	✓	
Contextualising the schedule of work for each SGB		✓					
Quality assuring the schedule of work for SGBs				✓	✓		
Setting the Academy day		✓					
Setting the Academy year					X	✓	
<b>Strategic Leadership and External Partnerships</b>							
Promote collaboration within the Trust and externally and identify and support the development of strategic partnerships that support the vision of the Trust		✓		X	X	✓	✓
Provide challenge and support to the CEO and the Strategic Governing Bodies appointing individuals as appropriate				X	X	✓	
Consider strategic threats and opportunities in relation to the Academies, assessing the impact on premises, curriculum, resources and admissions. No expansion or contraction of any Academy will be permitted without the Board's consent		X				✓	
Be responsible for the long term strategy of the Trust and each Academy, ensuring the Trust's strategic plan is robust, accountable and promotes outstanding teaching and learning		X				✓	

Strategy X = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
Intervene in the management of an Academy where necessary						✓	
Provide a perspective on the wider education community and the challenges facing state funded schools	X		✓				
Assist with the creation of a public face and external identity for the Academies within the Trust, facilitating discussions with those who might be considered	X		✓				
Approve the Admission Policy for the Academies, including acting as the initial decider for any exclusions by the Headteachers	X	✓					
Be made aware of all complaints coming in across the Trust and support Headteachers where deemed appropriate		X	✓		X		
<b>Academy improvement</b>							
Assist the Academies' leadership teams in the development of the curriculum which meets the Academy's specific needs and has regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any nationally recognised curriculum priorities and initiatives</li> <li>The obligation to provide religious education, sex education and physical education</li> <li>Special educational needs</li> <li>National testing and attainment targets and</li> <li>Any teaching objectives and priorities adopted by the Trust Board for all Academies</li> </ul>		X	✓		X		

<b>Strategy</b> X = Recommend/Responsibility ✓ = Approve/Accountability	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	Members
Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the AIP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studying data</li> <li>• Conducting monitoring visits</li> <li>• Receiving reports from the Headteacher and staff</li> </ul>		✓			X		
Quality assuring the AIP for each Academy		✓					
Validating or challenging the grades in the SEF		✓			X		
Quality assuring self-evaluation processes for each Academy		X		✓	✓		
Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning	X	X	✓		✓		
Monitoring and evaluating value for money at the academy	X	X	✓	✓			
Monitoring and evaluating behaviour, safety, welfare and engagement with stakeholders	X	X	✓		✓		
Identifying patterns and trends to bring to the attention of the Board			X	✓	✓		
<b>Pupils, parents and community</b>							
To determine who will be offered a place in accordance with the Admission Policy		✓					
To ensure that the GB and Academy complies with all regulations re the publishing of information		✓					
To ensure that all stakeholders have a voice in decisions that impact on them		✓				X	
Be responsible for all consultations and engagement with the community		✓				✓	

Strategy ✗ = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
<b>Financial management</b>							
Approving financial procedures in accordance with legal and DfE requirements and best practice				✗		✓	
Ensuring that the financial procedures are implemented effectively		✗		✓			
Maintaining accurate, reconciled and up to date records to provide financial and statistical information	✓		✓				
Establishing and maintaining asset registers in accordance with financial procedures	✓		✓				
Ensuring that any disposal of assets complies with the financial procedures and is reported	✓	✗				✓	
Maintaining a register or pecuniary and business interests of governors and staff		✗ Clerk				✓ Company Secretary	
Establishing and maintaining procedures for effective audit in accordance with legal and DfE requirements						✓	
Receiving reports from audit inspections and the resulting Action Plan		✓		✓			
Ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements in accordance with the financial procedures				✓		CFO	
To approve the first formal budget plan each financial year in accordance with DfE timeframes		✓		✗		✓	
Review reports from internal audit		✗		✓			
Ensure delivery of agreed actions from internal audit reports	✗	✓					



Strategy X = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
<b>Premises &amp; Estates</b>							
To establish and implement a Buildings Maintenance strategy			✓				
To maintain a strategic oversight of the Buildings Maintenance Strategy				X		✓	
Where appropriate raise funds, approving of grant applications put forward by the CEO and or the Strategic Governing Bodies		✓		✓			
To ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation		✓					
<b>Staffing</b>							
Recruiting & Appointing Headteachers			X			✓	
Recommending the staffing structure for each Academy	X	✓					
Approving the overall staffing structure for each Academy		X				✓	
Performance management of CEO						✓ Pay Panel	
Develop and adopt a set of HR policies and contracts to be used by all Academies ensuring consistency and having regard to all legal responsibilities and the equality duty, consulting as necessary			X			✓	

Strategy X = Recommend/Responsible ✓ = Approve/Accountable	Academy Leadership	Strategic Governing Body	Executive Leadership	STEP Audit Committee	STEP Standards Committee	STEP Board	STEP Members
Develop and implement termly Key Performance Indicators to assess the quality and success of teaching and learning at all stages of education			X		✓		
Approve Key Performance Indicators to assess the quality and success of teaching and learning at all stages of education			X			✓	
Monitor the standards of teaching and learning in each of the Academies, ensuring that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained					✓		
Formulate, implement and keep under review a policy for disciplinary and grievance procedures			X		X	✓	
Facilitate discussion with staff representative bodies, including the Unions at both Trust Board level and within the Academy				X		✓	

Performance management of Executive Team (excluding CEO)				X CEO leads		✓	
Performance management of central STEP Team for Operations and Financial				X CFO leads		✓	
Performance management of Headteachers including recommendations re pay		X CEO leads				✓	
Reviewing recommendations re teachers' and support staff salaries in each Academy		✓					



## Appendix 2

### Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Trustees



# STEP Academy Trust

<b>Job title:</b>	Trustee
<b>Location:</b>	Trust Board meetings to be held in a South or Central London location.  Site visits to local STEP Academies as necessary  Site visit to STEP Academy Trust registered office as necessary
<b>Hours:</b>	Up to six Trust Board meetings a year  Remote involvement via email/telephone  Regular review of reports and documentation
<b>Salary range:</b>	Voluntary
<b>Term of office:</b>	Four years

**Job purpose:** The Trustees oversee the management and administration of the Trust and the Academies run by the Trust.

Elected members of political parties are not eligible to become STEP Trustees, due to potential conflicts of interest

#### Job Description

##### Governance

The corporate management and trustee responsibility for the Trust is vested in the Trustees, who will also be the company Trustees registered with Companies House. The Trustees are personally responsible for the actions of the Trust and the Academies and are accountable to the Members of the Trust, the Secretary of State for Education and the wider community for the quality of the education received by all pupils of the Academies and the expenditure of public money.

The Trustees are required as trustees and pursuant to the Funding Agreements to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of the quality, safety and good practice of the affairs of the Trust.

### **Specific responsibilities of the Trust Board and the Trustees**

The role of the Trust Board and the Trustees collectively is to:

- determine the strategic vision and overarching strategic plan of the Trust;
- provide strategic leadership and governance;
- develop effective links within the Academy's community, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academies meet their responsibilities to the community and serve the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils;
- provide challenge and support to senior leaders including the CEO;
- develop and decide strategic and statutory policies;
- facilitate collaboration between the Academies to actively seek opportunities for the Academies to work together either with the aim of improving economic efficiencies within the Trust or identifying and implementing best practice across all Academies;
- encourage and oversee shared services and resources;
- oversee the implementation of Academy action plans focusing on Academy improvement;
- set and monitor performance benchmarks;
- determine curriculum priorities;
- set the overall Trust budget and approve of Academy budgets;
- monitor expenditure in accordance with appropriate authorisations;
- develop and implement a risk management strategy;
- ensure the Trust and the Academies comply with their legal obligations;
- determine the Trust's reserves/contingency policy;
- ensure appropriate insurance or risk cover is put in place;
- undertake recruitment and performance management of principals and other senior leaders;
- ensure staff training programmes and opportunities for professional development;
- support the development and building of leadership and governance capacity at Academy level;
- approve of site and asset management strategies;
- oversee any significant capital expenditure and building projects;
- approve of all funding applications;
- act as decision maker for all appeals.

### **Core Competencies**

The following core competencies and skills expected of the Trustees are that they will:

- work as a team;
- attend meetings and be prepared to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;

- be respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;
- treat all confidential information confidentially;
- act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy;
- develop a deep understanding of the vision and ethos of the Trust and its Academies and the roles played by all individuals in fulfilment of the Trust's mission;
- understand the policies and procedures of the Trust and how these flow down to the Academies;
- support the Trust in public and act as an ambassador of the Trust and the Academies;
- commit to training and skills development;
- be ready to ask questions;
- be focused on problem solving and be ready to learn from past experiences;
- adhere to the Nolan Principles in their conduct;
- Evidence the values of STEP Academy Trust in communications and actions

## Person Specification

### **Personal qualities and values – to have:**

- desire to create positive change for young people;
- commitment to the aims and objectives of STEP Academy Trust;
- willingness to devote time and effort;
- ability to work effectively as a team while contributing an independent perspective;
- ability to build productive and supportive professional relationships;
- commitment to the Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice;
- commitment to Safeguarding young people;

### **Education and training – to have:**

- A record of continuous professional development;
- Education to higher level in professional area of expertise.

### **Experience of:**

- Driving positive change;
- Leadership and management;
- Senior level Professional experience in relevant sector

### **Knowledge**

- understand and accept legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship;
- understand of the use of attainment and other data to assess the progress, strengths and weaknesses of an educational environment;
- understand of financial and workforce data.

**Skills:**

- An ability to think creatively and strategically ;
- Good, independent judgement;
- An ability to use financial and workforce data to inform decision-making.

**Legal Requirements:**

Individuals who are not able to make the following declarations may not serve as a Trustee:

- I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee;
- I have not been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (or any such conviction is legally regarded as “spent”);
- I have not been involved in tax fraud or other fraudulent behaviour including misrepresentation and/or identity theft;
- I have not used a tax avoidance scheme featuring charitable reliefs or using a charity to facilitate the avoidance;
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt;
- I have not made compositions or arrangements with my creditors from which I have not been discharged;
- I have not been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity;
- I have not been disqualified from serving as a company Trustee;
- I am not included in the list kept by the Secretary of State for Education under s1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (or equivalent) or have ever been disqualified from working with children or serving on a governing body of a school;

I am able to provide a valid Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which does not disclose any reason why I should be unsuitable for working with children.

## Appendix 3

### Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees



# STEP Academy Trust

## STEP ACADEMY TRUST (“the Trust”)

### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TRUST BOARD (“the Trust Board”)

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 2017**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Trustees of the Trust have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of Academies, but have delegated the governance responsibility to strategic governing bodies, who will support the work of the Trust and promote the success of the Academies. The day to day management and responsibility for the running of the Academies has been delegated to the CEO (also a Trustee), who will be supported by both a central management team (where appropriate) and leadership teams in each of the Academies, including the Headteachers appointed in respect of the Academies. The role and responsibilities of the Trustees and those serving on a strategic governing body are set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

The Trustees fulfil their responsibilities through strategic planning and by the setting of policy and standards as well as taking responsibility for the oversight and management of risk. The Trustees have the power to direct change where required. The Trustees must act independently and in the best interest of the Trust even if those interests conflict with those of the body or organisation that might have appointed or nominated such persons to serve on the Trust Board. The Trustees are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and to the communities that they serve. The Trustees, whilst in certain circumstances possibly also sitting on a Strategic governing body, are responsible for all the Academies run by the Trust and are expected to use their skills and experience in undertaking a role on the Trust Board.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The composition and powers of the Trust Board are (subject to charity and company law) determined by the Articles of Association and in any conflict between these Terms of Reference and the Articles, the Articles shall prevail. Board members must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the ethos and values of the Trust and a commitment to fulfilling the Trust’s mission and objectives for the Academy, drawing on specialist skills where required.

The number of Trustees shall be not less than three but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall not be subject to any maximum.

#### **QUORUM**

The quorum for a meeting of the Trustees, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be any three Trustees, or where greater, any one third (rounded down to a whole number) of the total number of Trustees holding office at the date of the meeting, who are in each case present at the meeting and entitled to vote on the matters to be resolved.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities of the Trustees are specified within the Decision Matrix in Appendix 1 of the STEP Scheme of Delegation.

## **REVIEW**

In accordance with best practice, the Trust Board will carry out a regular review of the skills and experience available on the Trust Board and will seek to develop additional capacity and skills where required. Except in relation to posts held in an ex officio capacity and otherwise only in exceptional circumstances, Trustees will not seek reappointment beyond the usual 3 terms of office, a standard term of office being 4 years.

## **THE GENERAL EQUALITY DUTY**

The Trust must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **Protected characteristics**

- Age (not pupils);
- Disability;
- Ethnicity and race;
- Gender;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Religion and Belief;
- Sexual identity and orientation.

## Appendix 4

### Role Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Governors (including specific responsibilities of the Chair)



# STEP Academy Trust

<b>Job title:</b>	STEP Governor serving on a Strategic Governing Body
<b>Location:</b>	Strategic Governing Body meetings to be held at the relevant Academies  Site visits to local STEP Academies as necessary
<b>Hours:</b>	Up to four Strategic Governing Body meetings a year  Remote involvement via email/telephone  Regular review of reports and documentation
<b>Salary range:</b>	Voluntary
<b>Term of office:</b>	Four years

**Job purpose:** The Strategic Governing Body for an Academy or Academies plays an active part in supporting the Head Teacher of the Academy, liaising as appropriate with the Trust's CEO and the Trust Board more generally in relation to the oversight of the Academies and the Academies' senior leadership teams.

Appointments to the Strategic Governing Body will be made by the Strategic Governing Body itself, subject to any ratification by the Trustees of STEP Academy Trust. Recommendations to appoint may be put forward by either the Head Teachers or by the Trustees. Elected members of political parties are not eligible to become STEP governors, due to potential conflicts of interest.

## Job Description

### **Governance Support and Local Accountability**

The role of those serving on a Strategic Governing Body is an important one, ensuring there is local accountability for the performance of the Trust and the Academies and that the Academies serve their communities. Those serving on a Strategic Governing Body are accountable to the Trust Board and must ensure that at all times they act in good faith and in the best interests of the Academies and the Trust, exercising reasonable care and skill having particular regard to personal knowledge and experience.

### **Specific responsibilities of STEP Governors**

The specific tasks and responsibilities of STEP Governors are as follows, to:

- ensure implementation of the strategic vision of the Trust and the Academies in particular;
- support the Trust Board in developing and maintaining effective links within the Academies' communities, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academies meet their responsibilities to the community and serves the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils;
- support and challenge the Academy's senior leadership team in regard to;
  - Academy works within its budget and implements the Trust's risk and financial management policies;
  - development and review of an appropriate staffing structure;
  - the recruitment and performance management of strategic personnel;
  - to curriculum and budgeting priorities, determining any local priorities;
  - monitoring pupil progress and analysing performance data, having regard to the performance benchmarks determined by the Trust across all Academies;
- promote collaboration with the other STEP Academies, actively seeking opportunities for the Academies to work together either with the aim of improving economic efficiencies within the Trust or identifying and implementing best practice across all Academies;
- review delegated local Academy policies (e.g. admissions, pupil behaviour, safeguarding);
- provide advice and feedback to the Trustees and reporting on all matters, responsibility for which has been passed to the Strategic Governing Body;
- ensure the implementation of any Academy plan, focusing particularly on Academy performance targets;
- undertake all and any appropriate community consultation;
- provide a point of contact for parents, carers and other members of the local community;
- maintain effective links with the local community.

### **Core Competencies**

The following core competencies and skills expected of Governors are to:

- work as a team;
- attend meetings and be prepared to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;
- be respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;

- treat all confidential information confidentially;
- act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy
- develop a deep understanding of the vision and ethos of the Trust and its Academies and the roles played by all individuals in fulfilment of the Trust's mission;
- understand the policies and procedures of the Trust and how these flow down to the Academies;
- support the Trust in public and act as an ambassador of the Trust and the Academies;
- commit to training and skills development
- be ready to provide challenge;
- be focused on problem solving and be ready to learn from past experiences;
- act in accordance with any authority delegated to him or her, including complying with any regulation or requirement of those from whom delegated authority is received;
- adhere to the Nolan Principles in their conduct;
- Evidence the values of STEP Academy Trust in communications and actions

#### Person Specification

To be same as Trustee, except education to higher level (not relevant), and strategic and creativity skills

#### **Legal Requirements:**

Individuals who are not able to make the following declarations may not serve on the Strategic Governing Body:

- I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee
- I have not been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (or any such conviction is legally regarded as "spent")
- I have not been involved in tax fraud or other fraudulent behaviour including misrepresentation and/or identity theft
- I have not used a tax avoidance scheme featuring charitable reliefs or using a charity to facilitate the avoidance
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt
- I have not made compositions or arrangements with my creditors from which I have not been discharged
- I have not been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity
- I have not been disqualified from serving as a company Trustee
- I am not included in the list kept by the Secretary of State for Education under s1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (or equivalent) or have ever been disqualified from working with children or serving on a governing body of a school
- I am able to provide a valid Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which does not disclose any reason why I should be unsuitable for working with children

## **Additional Responsibilities of the Chair**

The role of the Chair of the Strategic Governing Body is an important one, demanding yet worthwhile. The Chair is elected by the Governors annually but because of the vital link and the importance of maintaining a strong and effective relationship between the Strategic Governing Body and the Trust Board, the appointment following election is subject to the approval of the CEO, on behalf of the Trust Board. The Chair must be approachable, readily accessible and ready to take issues and ideas raised by Governors seriously.

The Chair's specific duties are to:

- provide a clear lead and direction for the Governors, understanding the aims of the Academies, the roles played by all those involved and the vision of the Trust in relation to its Academies;
- build an effective team, attracting Governors with necessary skills and experience promoting equality and diversity and ensuring priority is given to those who can make a positive contribution to driving school improvement and supporting their development to maximise the benefit of their contribution;
- work closely with the Headteachers and the Leadership Team to ensure there is proper challenge and encouragement whilst respecting the professional expertise and knowledge of the academy's leaders, and the personal accountability of the individuals within the leadership team;
- ensure that Academy improvement is the focus of all policy and strategy for the Academies, reminding Governors of this as often as necessary;
- hold Governors to account, ensuring the business of the Strategic Governing Body is conducted efficiently and effectively, chairing meetings ensuring all members have the opportunity to contribute and are listened to with clear decisions being made when necessary.

## Appendix 5

### Terms of Reference for the Strategic Governing Body



# STEP Academy Trust

STEP ACADEMY TRUST (“the Trust”)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STRATEGIC GOVERNING BODY (“the Strategic Governing Body”)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 2017

#### PURPOSE

Each Academy is accountable to and must serve its community. All children deserve and should expect to receive a high standard of education. Whilst the Trustees of the Trust have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, and the standards achieved by the pupils and students of the Academies, a Strategic Governing Body has been set up to ensure the vision of the Trust is fulfilled. The Strategic Governing Body is focused on the day to day life of the Academies form which it has responsibility and is there to ensure the staff working in the Academies are supported and challenged, when necessary, and the needs of the pupils and students are met.

The Strategic Governing Body represents the community and is responsible for all engagement with parents and the wider community. The Strategic Governing Body will assist the Trustees in the development of policy and strategy; advising on standards and target setting as well as daily life within the Academy and working with the Trust’s CEO and the senior leadership teams in the Academies to secure the long term success of the Academy.

#### MEETINGS

The Strategic Governing Body shall meet at least once a term.

#### QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Strategic Governing Body is any three of the members of the Strategic Governing Body, or, where greater, any one third (rounded down to a whole number) of the total number of persons holding office on the Strategic Governing Body at the date of the meeting. The quorum for the purposes of: appointing a parent member; any vote on the removal of a person in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation; any vote on the removal of the chairman of the Strategic Governing Body; shall be any two-thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time persons entitled to vote on those respective matters.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Governors are specified within the Decision Matrix in Appendix 1 of the STEP Scheme of Delegation.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The role of those serving on the Strategic Governing Body is an important one, fulfilling the Trust's mission and providing feedback to the Trustees of the Trust. Those serving on the Strategic Governing Body must act independently and in the best interest of the Academies and the Trust, whilst recognising that the Academy is part of a family of schools run by the Trust each with collective responsibility. They will act as ambassadors of the Academies and the Trust and must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the ethos and values of the Trust and a commitment to fulfilling the Trust's mission and objectives for the Academies, using their skills and experience and drawing on specialist skills where required.

Specific skills may be needed if a member of the Strategic Governing Body is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area as part of a working party or when invited to serve on any of the Trust's committees looking at finances, audit and risk management, premises, resources, standards and continuous school improvement across the Trust. A regular skills audit will be undertaken and those serving on the Strategic Governing Body should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Academies.

The Strategic Governing Body will comply with any guidance issued from time to time by the Trust Board as to the composition of the Strategic Governing Body, the carrying out elections and any other matter affecting the functioning of the Strategic Governing Body, including the holding of meetings and the removal of Governors. Minutes of all meetings will be sent to the CEO.

The responsibilities of the Strategic Governing Body are specified in the Decision Matrix within the Scheme of Delegation.

## **REVIEW**

In accordance with best practice, the Strategic Governing Body will carry out a regular review of the skills and experience available on the board and will seek to develop additional capacity and skills where required. The Trust Board will review these Terms of Reference on a regular basis and will support the work of the Strategic Governing Body.

## **THE GENERAL EQUALITY DUTY**

The Academies must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **Protected characteristics**

- Age (not pupils)
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual identity and orientation



# STEP Academy Trust

## STEP Audit Committee

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Membership

3 members comprising of:

- 3 members of STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees.

It is preferable that the Chair of the Committee has Financial and/or Audit and Governance experience.

The Chair will be appointed by the STEP Board of Trustees.

In addition, a Clerk will be appointed to assist with the administration of the Committee. The CEO, and members of the Executive Management Team will be required to attend via invitation, along with other staff as the need arises.

#### 2. Period of Office

The members of the Committee shall serve for a period of two years, and are eligible for re-election.

Membership shall cease by:

- mutual agreement
- resignation as either a Trust Trustee or Trust Employee

#### 3. Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year, usually at least two weeks prior to the STEP Trustees' Board meeting.

#### 4. Quorum

At least one member and the Chair.

#### 5. Authority

The Audit Committee is a Committee of the Board and is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board. It is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee, external audit, internal audit or other assurance provider.

The Audit Committee is authorised to obtain outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary, normally in consultation with the Accounting Officer and Chair of the Board of Trustees. However, the Audit Committee may not incur expenditure in excess of £10,000 in any single financial year without the prior approval of the Board of Trustees.

## **6. Purpose**

With regard to the Trust, the Audit Committee is to maintain oversight of:

- Governance and internal control
- Risk management
- Financial management and value for money
- External audit
- Financial statements and annual reports.

In addition, the Committee will operate a Pay Review function to receive, review and make decisions on the remuneration of staff working across the STEP Trust, with the exception of the CEO. The remuneration of the CEO will be considered by the Committee, with a recommendation as appropriate made to the Board of Trustees.

## **7. Duties**

The duties of the Audit Committee are to:

- 7.1 Advise the Board of Trustees and the Accounting Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the areas highlighted within section 6. This advice will take the form of a verbal report accompanied by minutes to the Board of Trustees, as well as a written report to be received at the autumn term Board meeting.
- 7.2 Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees with regard to the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remuneration of the external auditor.
- 7.3 Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees with regard to the need for, and when appropriate, the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remunerations of an internal auditor and/or other assurance provider to enable the Board to sign the corporate governance statement in the annual accounts.
- 7.4 Advise the Board of Trustees on an appropriate programme of work to be delivered by independent assurance provider (ie Responsible Officer). The programme of work will be derived from the Audit Committee's review of the key risks facing the Trust, the assurance framework and its duty to report to the Board.
- 7.5 Review the external auditor's annual planning document and approve the planned audit approach.
- 7.6 Receive reports from external auditor and other bodies, for example the Education Funding Agency, and consider any issues raised, the associated management response and action plans. Where appropriate, reports should be referred to the Board for action.
- 7.7 Regular monitoring of outstanding actions raising from independent assurance providers, ensuring any delays in implementing recommendations are reasonable
- 7.8 Review the STEP Fraud Policy and ensure that all allegations of fraud or irregularity are investigated appropriately.

- 7.9 Consider any additional services delivered by the external auditor or other assurance provider and ensure appropriate independence is maintained.
- 7.10 Ensure appropriate cooperation and coordination of the work of external auditors and the Responsible Officer.
- 7.11 Meet with the external auditors, without management present, at least annually.
- 7.12 Review the high level processes and procedures in place to manage the financial management within each Academy
- 7.13 Oversee the development of STEP specific Financial Procedures manual, in line with Academies Handbook and other EFA guidance.
- 7.14 Consider the minutes of the SGB Resources Committees, and action as appropriate.

## **8. Administration**

The Audit Committee will meet at least once per term, usually at least two weeks in advance of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the following requirements will be met:

- The Chair of the Board of Trustees cannot be a member of the Audit Committee.
- The Chair of the Audit Committee will be a Trustee of the Trust
- The Accounting Officer, Chief Finance and Operations Officer and any other paid staff will have no voting rights and cannot Chair the Committee
- Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of Audit Committee, with all required papers and reports circulated at least five working days in advance of the meeting.

## Appendix 7

### Terms of Reference for STEP Standards Committee



# STEP Academy Trust

## STEP Standards Committee

### Terms of Reference

#### **Membership**

3 members comprising of:

- 3 members of STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees. The Chair will be appointed by the

STEP Board of Trustees.

In addition, a Clerk will be appointed to assist with the administration of the Committee. The CEO, and members of the Executive Management Team will be required to attend via invitation, along with other staff as the need arises.

#### **Period of Office**

The members of the Committee shall serve for a period of two years, and are eligible for re-election.

Membership shall cease by:

- mutual agreement
- resignation as either a Trust Trustee or Trust Employee

#### **Meetings**

The Committee will meet at least three times per year, usually at least two weeks prior to the STEP Trustees' Board meeting.

#### **Quorum**

At least one member and the Chair.

#### **Authority**

The Standards Committee is a Committee of the Board and is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board.

#### **Purpose**

With regard to the Trust, the Standards Committee is to maintain oversight of:

Monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and attainment and the quality of teaching, ensuring the Trust provides a consistently high quality learning experience and delivers a broad and balanced curriculum in keeping with the Trust's aims and vision, all pupil needs and legal requirements.

**Duties**

The duties of the Standards Committee are to:

- i. Advise the Board of Trustees, holding SGBs to account on the adequacy and effectiveness of the areas highlighted within the Purpose;
- ii. Report or make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the SEF, the Academy Improvement Plan and the policies allocated to the SGB Standards Committee;
- iii. take appropriate action on any relevant matter referred by the SGB.

**Administration**

The Standards Committee will meet at least once per term, in advance of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the following requirements will be met:

- The Chair of the Board of Trustees cannot be a member of the Standards Committee.
- The Chair of the Standards Committee will be a Trustee of the Trust
- Any paid staff will have no voting rights and cannot Chair the Committee
- Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of Standards Committee, with all required papers and reports circulated at least five working days in advance of the meeting.



# **STEP LEAD GOVERNORS**

## **A RESOURCE FOR GOVERNORS**

All Strategic Governing Bodies (SGBs) must have a Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors. In addition, governing bodies may appoint individual governors to have oversight of a specific area of SGB responsibility, subject area, year groups or key stages.

This booklet contains some “role descriptions” for governors taking on such a role. Please note that the roles and key tasks are not exhaustive – there may be other roles that governors take on which are particularly relevant to each Academy.

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## **SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR (INCLUDING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN)**

### **Role Description**

The “Keeping Children Safe in Education” Statutory Guidance for Academies and Colleges (2016) produced by the Department for Education defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Providing for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a statutory requirement for all schools. Provision for SMSC should link closely to each Academy’s ethos and values, and the broad and balanced curriculum that it aims to provide.

Part of the role of the Standards Governor will be to challenge and ensure that each Academy provides a safe, supportive environment for all pupils, and that it enables them to participate in school life, and to develop the skills and attitudes that will prepare them for life in a diverse society.

Another part of the role is to be a champion for Looked After Children in each Academy on behalf of your SGB, to be familiar with STEP’s policy for Looked After Children and to help ensure that they remain high of your SGB’s agenda.

Your role is to act as a critical friend to your Academy(ies) to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda and all statutory SGB responsibilities and that the safeguarding agenda is embedded within the ethos of our Trust.

### **Key Tasks**

- Be familiar with current legislation on child protection and safer recruitment, STEP’s Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and be aware of changes to the regulations.
- Liaise regularly with the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding (often the Headteacher), about general child protection and broader safeguarding issues in each Academy (including Looked After Children), record keeping systems and report back to your SGB on a regular basis.
- Have oversight of the Single Central Record and ensure it is up to date and maintained in line with current guidance.
- Undertake appropriate training on child protection/safeguarding and encourage other governors to attend.
- Monitor training and development undertaken by governors to ensure at least one governor on any recruitment and selection panel for staff has successfully completed accredited Safer Recruitment training.
- Monitor progress against any outstanding actions from your SGB’s annual Safeguarding Audit and any other reviews/inspections.

- Ensure all are aware of how to maintain a highly vigilant culture of safeguarding in each Academy where the safeguarding of all pupils is paramount.
- Ability to articulate how governors and staff within the Academy, at all levels, have worked to create a strong, positive culture of safeguarding.
- Ensure there are regular questions are asked, shared scenarios and training/safeguarding updates and visual information is displayed around each Academy which is shared with parents/carers to support the high expectations of safeguarding across each Academy.
- To ensure that your SGB discusses the attainment of Looked After Children on a regular/annual basis.
- To ensure that each Academy has effective procedures for communicating with carers of Looked After Children.
- To ensure that if your Academies do not currently have any Looked After Children on roll, they are well prepared to meet their needs should the position change.

### **Suggested questions to ask**

- Does each Academy have a Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with DfE guidance and is the policy made available to parents on request?
- Does each Academy operate safe recruitment procedures and are all appropriate checks carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children?
- How are child protection/safeguarding issues monitored?
- Are staff aware of the procedure that needs to be followed when they have concerns about child protection?
- Have staff and governors received appropriate child protection/safeguarding training?
- Do we run E-Safety awareness training for staff, governors, pupils and parents?
- Does each Academy have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers that comply with the guidance of the Board of Trustees and locally agreed inter-agency procedures?
- Is there a senior member of each Academy's leadership team designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues and does that individual provide advice and support to all staff, liaise with the Local Authority and work with other agencies?
- Does each Designated Safeguarding Lead undertake specified safeguarding training? Is this training refreshed at 2-yearly intervals to keep his/her knowledge and skills up-to-date?

- Does your SGB set clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and explicitly state these in key policy documents?
- Does your SGB demonstrate a culture of listening to and engaging the views of children in appropriate ways to their age and understanding and take account of those views in individual decisions and in the development and improvement of services or the organisation?
- Does your SGB remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay?
- Does your SGB ensure that the individual carrying out the role of the named governor is not a member of Academy staff?
- Is a member of your SGB (usually the Chair) nominated to be responsible for liaising with the Board of Trustees and/or partner agencies, as appropriate, in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher?
- Does your SGB review its policies and procedures annually and does it complete the annual Safeguarding Checklist provide by their Local Authority about how duties have been discharged?
- Is your SGB aware of its role and responsibilities under the new OFSTED inspection framework in tackling bullying in and outside of each Academy setting?
- How many Looked After Children are there in each Academy and in what year groups?
- Which other local authorities are involved?
- What is the attainment and progress made by Looked After Children who are currently or have been on roll within the past twelve months in relation to all children at each Academy?
- Is the pattern of attendance and exclusions for Looked After Children different to that of all children? If so, what action has been taken to address this?
- Are there any issues arising from Personal Education Plans (PEPs)?
- Are any Looked After Children identified as more able and how are their needs being met?
- Do any Looked After Children have any Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)? If so, how are their needs being met?
- How does each Academy work with their LA's Virtual School team?
- Do any of our Academy's policies impact on Looked After Children and if so, how is this negated? (charging for educational visits and extended Academy activities)

## **SEND GOVERNOR**

### **Role**

Your role as the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Governor means that you should take a special interest in developing and maintain an awareness of Special Educational Needs and Disability provision in each Academy on behalf of your SGB.

### **Key Tasks**

- Be familiar with the Department for Education – Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: Statutory Guidance – January 2015.
- Keep up to date on developments in SEND nationally, locally and within each Academy.
- Be familiar with STEP's Inclusion Policy (incl SEND, EAL, CLA and Most Able) and be involved in its development and review.
- Meet each Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) on a termly basis to find out about the provision made for pupils in each Academy and to monitor the implementation of the Inclusion Policy (incl SEND, EAL, CLA and Most Able).
- Understand how the responsibilities for SEND provision are led and shared within each Academy.
- Ensure that the Inclusion Policy (incl SEND, EAL, CLA and Most Able) is linked to each Academy Improvement Plan and the budget setting process.
- Encourage your SGB to ensure that all Academy policies are consistent with the aims of the Inclusion Policy (incl SEND, EAL, CLA and Most Able).
- Visit each Academy to observe how pupils with SEND are actively involved in all aspects of Academy life.
- Discuss with the SENDCO and other staff the outcomes of each Academy's monitoring and evaluation of the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND.
- Report back to your SGB on agreed indicators to be reported on by each Academy.
- Ensure that each Academy website publicises the required information regarding SEND provision in each Academy.

### **Suggested questions to ask**

- What is the profile of pupils with SEND?
- How much time does the SENDCO have for this role?
- How many staff work wholly or partly with pupils with SEND? What induction/training do they receive?

- What resources are available for SEND and how are they deployed?
- How accessible are our Academies' building and grounds?
- How accessible is the curriculum for SEND pupils, including Academy visits and trips?
- What are the attendance/exclusion figures for pupils with SEND?
- What are the outcomes (attainment and progress) for pupils with SEND?

## **PUPIL PREMIUM GOVERNOR**

### **Role**

The role of a pupil premium link governor will involve analysis of the following two areas of the management of each Academy:

- The allocation of resources and consequent audit trail
- Narrowing attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils

### **Key Tasks**

- Understand relevant Academy pupil performance data that shows progress of different groups over time.
- Be familiar with the concept of the Pupil Premium; what it is, why it has been set in place, how it is allocated, how it is calculated, which groups of pupils attract the Premium.
- Become familiar with each Academy's Pupil Premium Policy.
- Know basic Pupil Premium facts for each Academy; how many pupils attract the Premium, how this figure compares with other local and similar Academies, how the money is spent.
- Understand relevant Academy pupil performance data that shows progress of different groups over time.
- Monitor spending of the Pupil Premium, ensuring the money is spent in identifiable ways to support target groups of pupils.
- Monitor the impact of Pupil Premium spending on target groups.
- Meet occasionally with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and/or other staff responsible for performance data to discuss issues around underperforming groups including those eligible for Pupil Premium.
- Monitor the attainment of different groups of pupils over time to provide evidence of how Pupil Premium pupils are progressing compared with others.
- Challenge the allocation of the Pupil Premium Grant if there is no clear audit trail evidencing appropriate use of the resources.
- Take an active part in any SGB discussions when the allocation and monitoring of the Pupil Premium is discussed and decided.
- Report back to your SGB on each Academy's use of the Pupil Premium.
- Visiting each Academy to find out about Pupil Premium expenditure.

## **Suggested questions to ask**

- How effective is each Academy's Pupil Premium Policy in supporting the target groups?
- How confident are you that the Pupil Premium Grant is spent appropriately on the intended target groups?
- Is the Pupil Premium funding kept separate from general Academy resources so it can be specifically and identifiably used as intended?
- How is the allocation of the Pupil Premium decided?
- What is the Pupil Premium used for?
- How is the progress of different groups of pupils monitored so that each Academy can identify any under-performing groups?
- Are there groups of pupils whose attainment falls behind others?
- How does the attainment of Pupil Premium pupils as a group compare with others?
- What would you say are the main challenges in the use of the Pupil Premium and how is each Academy working to overcome them?
- What benefits can you see from the allocation of the Pupil Premium Grant?
- Is there anything that your SGB should be aware of that could help each Academy gain the maximum advantage from the Pupil Premium Grant?

## **Finance and Operations Governor**

### **Role Description**

The role is not designed to take on any responsibilities for operational or strategic matters that are within the remit of employees of STEP Academy Trust. Instead, the aim of the role is to provide assurance and act as a 'link governor' between each Academy and your SGB by:

- Acting as an objective sounding board for the Headteacher and Business Manager;
- Receiving regular reviews of the financial planning, position and reporting
- In conjunction with the Business Manager and Headteacher, provide information to your SGB on financial matters as required.

### **Key Tasks**

- Reviewing monthly reports
- Liaise with Business Manager monthly to discuss each Academy's financial position, including income, expenditure, commitments and forecasts
- Review reports from Internal Audit for assurance on academy internal control systems
- Discussing budget implications of major initiatives, current commitments, and changes to existing arrangements or external influences on budgets
- Review Academy KPI's, ensuring that connection between KPI, Budget and Academy Improvement plan objective is shared with SGB

### **Suggested Questions to Ask**

#### Performance & Reporting

- What was contained as recommendations within the last Audit report – have they now been implemented? What rating did each Academy receive?
- What was contained within the last OFSTED report? Any areas for improvement identified which have a budget impact, if so what action has been taken?

#### Academy and Staff Development and Priorities

- Do you know the priorities of each Academy? What are each Academy's strengths and weaknesses? How are these being addressed?
- Have you seen each Academy Improvement Plan? As a Governor what input did you have in its completion?
- How are staff kept up to date with new techniques/personal development?

- Have you been involved in the decision making on capital spending? What are each Academy's priorities?
- Is there a rolling programme for updating ICT?

### **Attainment/Deprivation Support**

- How many pupils are eligible for a free school meal? What percentage is this of the whole population? What measures/extra support are put in place to ensure these pupils are achieving a satisfactory standard of attainment or above?
- In [year] each Academy received Pupil Premium of [£.....] per pupil who has been eligible for a free school meal in the last 6 years (FSM6), [£.....] Service children and [£.....] for Looked after Children (LAC). How will this funding be used? This must be published on each Academy website including the impact it has made.
- Similar to Pupil Premium, what information is available for use of Sports Grant?
- How much funding does each Academy receive for social deprivation? How will this funding be used to support disadvantaged pupils?
- How often are you updated on the attainment level of pupils in your Academy?
- How are Teaching Assistants deployed? How do they contribute to raising standards?

### **Budget Monitoring, Budget Plan and Visits**

- Has each Academy ever demonstrated the budget plan to you?
- Each Academy budget must be submitted to the STEP Audit Committee by 31 May. Do you know how much each Academy is expecting to carry forward at the year end? If an Academy is projecting a deficit, what action is being taken by the Headteacher/Business Manager to address this? Does this action seem reasonable, appropriate and achievable?
- What are the predictions for pupil numbers in your Academies? How will this affect funding, staffing etc?
- Do you know how much each Academy is spending on its SEND pupils? Do you know how much funding each Academy is getting to cover this?

### **Value for Money**

- What annual contracts does each Academy enter into? How often are these reviewed?
- What discussions take place around achieving value for money?
- Have you discussed key indicators or any other benchmarking information?

## Staffing

Are you aware of the staffing structure within your Academies? How is the staff structure enabling delivery of the Academy Improvement Plan?

When a member of staff leaves, are you consulted on whether to replace or not? Staff structures should not only be reviewed due to budget pressures.

If the Headteacher were to announce that they were leaving, what consideration has been given to succession planning?

Are all staff on permanent contracts? What salary points are staff on and how will this impact on future years?

Do all staff pay into a pension scheme?

## Operations

- Review and review with Business Manager termly reports and progress against identified KPIS
- Confirm Health and Safety and Risk Management processes are in place
- Review with Business Manager in-year and three year plans for ICT and Premises and Estates

## **Headteacher Performance Management Governors**

The STEP PM process has been revised to ensure objectives for more senior roles are set first, rather than last. This will make it easier for PM objectives of other roles to link in with individual Academy and whole Trust priorities.

Formal Executive Headteacher/Headteacher PM Reviews and Objective Setting meetings will take place before the appraisal period and will involve a governor and a member of the Executive Team. In Academies where there are Heads of School in post, it is the responsibility of the EHT/HT to review the previous year's performance and set objectives for the current year.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set for each teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. They will take into account individual career aspirations including the assessment of threshold standards. The number of objectives must be reasonable and there should be consistency within the school. In most cases there will be 3, and a maximum of 6 objectives. Objectives may be revised if there is a significant change in circumstances, eg change of job role, long term sickness, maternity leave or if a teacher requires more support to meet the Teachers' Standards.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to each Academy's plans for improving each Academy's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that Academy. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives against each Academy Improvement Plan.

### **Reviewing performance**

#### **Development and support**

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to Academy improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

#### **Observation**

Our Academies believe that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion. The classroom observation protocol is set out in Appendix 1.

Teachers (including the head teacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

#### **Feedback**

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year, and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light with written feedback provided within 5 working days of a performance management observation. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Teachers will be made aware of their progress towards meeting the criteria for pay progression. In the event that a teacher is unlikely to meet the criteria for pay progression they can expect to be alerted to this and given support to improve their performance.

## **STANDARDS GOVERNOR**

### **Role**

To keep your SGB and Head of Standards/STEP Standards Committee informed of standards achieved and the resource needs of the curriculum area in order to maintain and raise standards.

### **Key tasks**

- Review STEP Performance Indicators against relevant academy recent outcomes at EYFS, KS1 and KS2;
- Keep up to date with STEP Standards key performance indicators, academy targets and pupil outcomes at all key stages nationally, attainment and progress, Ofsted Inspection criteria and relevant DfE guidance, policy and practice impacting on STEP Academy Trust and academies locally;
- Meet at least termly with relevant Academy leaders to become informed on current standards across the key stages and how the aim to raise standards is reflected within the Academy Improvement Plans. Liaise with Academy leaders to obtain following information:
  - Training available;
  - Condition and availability of resources;
  - SEND provision;
  - Planning, assessment and recording procedures;
  - Standards of achievement for all key groups, including disadvantaged;
  - Operation of policies;
  - Contribute to the monitoring of Academies improvement priorities and other plans;
  - Assist in monitoring and review of relevant policies and ensure this is completed in line with policy review timetable;
  - Provide link about Academies practice and policy in chosen area with Academies and SGBs;
  - Attend relevant training;
  - Visit Academies, within agreed protocol for governors visits, to better understand how planned improvements to raise standards are affecting staff, pupils and parents;
  - Support and promote involvement of parents;
  - Encourage relevant Academy leaders to give occasional presentations to SGB;
  - Report back to your SGB following focused visits to Academies using agreed protocol on visiting and reporting procedures.

### **Suggested questions to ask**

- What issues arise from Academy self-evaluation that relate to this subject and what plans do we have to address them?
- What progress are we making towards implementing plans and how will we assess the impact?
- In what particular ways does the subject contribute to achieving statutory and other targets?

- How is pupil progress monitored and assessed and how well do pupils know their individual targets?
- What areas of staff development are currently being addressed through continuing professional development?
- How does each Academy communicate with and involve parents?

## **LEAD GOVERNOR FOR WEBSITE MONITORING**

### **Role**

When considering the skills listed [in the audit], it is important to understand that **governance is a 'thinking' not a 'doing' role**. This means that the skills and knowledge sought are those which enable governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have focused discussions which create robust accountability for school leaders.

For example, a governor might work in the construction industry, but it would not be appropriate for him/her to carry out a health and safety check at the school. Similarly, a lawyer should not be asked to give free legal advice. **Governance is a strategic role and governors must not be tempted to do the staff's job**: management must be left to the school leadership team.

So the role of the Lead Governor is to ask good questions about what is on an Academy's website and explore why certain information is published or withheld and think about how the website can support the Academy's strategic direction. This could be by:

- Being the link between your SGB and each Academy in relation to monitoring compliance of their website.
- Raise awareness of website compliance issues at full SGB meetings.
- Help your SGB to ensure it fulfils its statutory duties/priorities towards website compliance.
- Help review each Academy's policies to ensure they promote/reflect website compliance appropriately.
- Act as a critical friend to the member of staff leading the update of the Academy website, supporting and challenging appropriately.
- Help to ensure that each Academy communicates well with relevant agencies and stakeholders with respect to their websites.

### **Key Tasks**

- Speak with governing bodies from other local schools where a school's website was indicated as a positive feature or an area for improvement in an inspection report
- Examine the websites of those schools – using the Internet Archive to see available older versions if they have changed significantly post-inspection

- Read Ofsted reports – or search using a service like Watchsted for schools where *website* or *online* is mentioned (Watchsted currently only shows recent reports)
- Withhold *some* professional opinions on design, colour – governors are generally not the main audience for a school’s website.
- Meet the member of staff leading on updating each Academy’s website on a regular basis.
- Plan your meetings to allow regular feedback to your SGB.

#### **Suggested Questions**

- If school governance is indeed a thinking role, rather than a doing role, what thinking did our governing body do before our latest Academy website was published?
- Is the role concerned with compliance or a culture of communication?
- Does our governing body use the website to communicate about its processes with the Academy community – or are we happy with a list of names, accompanied by what type of governor an individual is? Have we considered pictures? Has anyone ever suggested making a video introducing the governors?

## **LEAD GOVERNOR FOR ADMISSIONS AND APPEALS**

### **Role**

- The lead governor will lead on reviewing each Academy's admission policy and determine the admission of individual pupils, in accordance with the Academy's procedures on an annual basis.
- Raise awareness of admissions and appeals issues at full SGB meetings.
- Help your SGB to ensure it fulfils its statutory duties/priorities towards school admissions and appeals.
- Help to ensure that each Academy communicates well with relevant agencies and stakeholders with respect to school admissions and appeals.

### **Restrictions on persons taking part in proceedings**

Any governor who has a child applying to enter the Academy or who has a conflict of interest with regard to any application submitted.

### **Key Tasks**

- Meet the member of staff leading admissions on a regular basis.
- Plan your meetings to allow regular feedback to your SGB.
- To review, on an annual basis, admissions arrangements and to make recommendations for changes to the governing body (including each Academy's admission number and the area served by the Academy), as appropriate;
- To consider and decide on any applications for admission to the Academy, in accordance with the Admissions Policy, oversubscription criteria (when applications exceed the admission number) and relevant legislation;
- To have full regard to the School Admissions Code and to comply with the statutory provisions within that Code;
- To seek professional advice from the Local Authority as necessary;
- To attend relevant training where appropriate.

### **Suggested Questions**

- How many vacancies are in each year group?
- Have parents been given information on applying for secondary schools, if their child is in Year 6?
- How many children are on each waiting list?
- Have parents been given information on applying for Reception?

## **Mentor for a new governor**

### **Role**

A Governor Mentor should have two main objectives:

- To provide on-going support and information to the new governor
- To develop a committed and valued member of the governing board

### **Initial support**

The Governor Mentor will discuss the following with the new governor:

- General expectations of governors
- Training opportunities and expectations (particularly induction training)
- The STEP Governor Job Description/ Code of Conduct
- The meeting schedule, to reinforce expected time commitments and to demonstrate how the governors work with the school during the year
- A typical full governing board meeting agenda, to demonstrate how this normally works
- STEP's guidance on the type of questions for governors to ask and the invitation to submit strategic questions in advance of meetings
- National standards and expectations, alongside the school's performance, to clarify aspirations
- Lead Governor roles and their contribution to the function of the governing board, to identify any areas where the new governor's skills can be put to use
- Opportunities to shadow a governor visit

Mentoring should reinforce the value of governors asking probing questions, even those that may seem obvious. Contact between the new governor and mentor could include face-to-face discussions, telephone calls and electronic discussions. Both parties should agree the level of contact to ensure that this is not onerous for either individual. It is vital to provide relevant information and advice at a pace that will support the new governor rather than overwhelm them.

### **Ongoing support**

After these initial discussions, it is beneficial for the mentor to speak with the new governor before and after:

- Full governing board meetings and committee meetings
- Activities such as governor visits
- Appeals panels

This will allow the new governor to ask questions, and the Mentor to provide any relevant feedback.

## LEAD GOVERNOR FOR **\*\*subject/area\*\***

### Role

- Be the link between your SGB and each Academy in relation to **\*\*subject\*\***.
- Raise awareness of **\*\*subject\*\*** issues at full SGB meetings.
- Help your SGB to ensure it fulfils its statutory duties/priorities towards **\*\*subject\*\***.
- Help review each Academy's policies to ensure they promote/reflect **\*\*subject\*\*** appropriately.
- Act as a critical friend to the member of staff leading **\*\*subject\*\***, supporting and challenging appropriately.
- Help to ensure that **\*\*subject\*\*** issues are an integral part of Academy planning and budget setting.
- Help to ensure that, where required, there are funds allocated each year within each Academy budget specifically to support **\*\*subject\*\***.
- Help to ensure that each Academy communicates well with relevant agencies and stakeholders with respect to **\*\*subject\*\***.

### Key Tasks

- Get to know the subject/area through regular visits to see it at work.
- Meet the member of staff leading **\*\*subject\*\*** on a regular basis.
- Plan your meetings to allow regular feedback to your SGB.
- Use the meetings to
  - Understand the operation of relevant policies in **\*\*subject\*\***;
  - Understand the barriers/progress/outcomes in **\*\*subject\*\***;
  - Understand planning, assessment and recording procedures in **\*\*subject\*\***;
  - Understand how **\*\*subject\*\*** is differentiated for different groups of pupils (eg different key stages, pupils with SEND, Most Able etc);
  - Understand how **\*\*subject\*\*** makes use of any Pupil Premium allocated to it.

## **YEAR LINK GOVERNOR (IF REQUIRED)**

### **Role**

A Year Link Governor will provide the link between your SGB and staff.

By getting to know the year group they are linked with, a governor will contribute to the role of your SGB in knowing each Academy and holding it to account.

### **Key Tasks**

- To meet with the Head of Year/staff each term to become better informed and discuss the implementation of agreed actions and progress towards targets.
- To review information from assessment statistics in order to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of standards.
- To undertake visits to Academy to learn about the particular year group and view activities such as assemblies, lessons or other activities in order to gain an understanding of teaching and learning strategies and resources available.
- To learn about any particular curriculum/pastoral activity which are relevant to that year group, such as option choices, assessment requirements.
- To be familiar with information from other sources (e.g. Local Authority, OFSTED).
- To provide a termly report to your SGB.

### **Suggested questions to ask**

- What issues arise from Academy self-evaluation that apply particularly to this year group and what plans do we have to address them?
- What progress are we making towards implementing plans and how will we assess the impact?
- How is pupil progress monitored and assessed and how well do pupils know their individual targets?
- What areas of staff development are currently being addressed through continuing professional development?
- How does each Academy communicate with and involve parents?

## **KEY STAGE GOVERNOR (IF REQUIRED)**

### **Role**

The Key Stage Governor will provide the link between your SGB and staff.

By getting to know the Key Stage they are linked with, governors contribute to the role of your SGB in knowing each Academy and holding it to account.

### **Key Tasks**

- To meet with the Key Stage co-ordinator/Lead each term to become better informed and discuss the implementation of agreed actions and progress towards targets.
- To attend, where possible, relevant staff training where this is appropriate.
- To review information from assessment statistics in order to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of standards.
- To observe, by agreement with teaching and other staff, lessons or other activities in order to gain an understanding of teaching and learning strategies and resources available.
- To develop an understanding of transition issues for pupil intake and pupil leavers and how each Academy is addressing these issues.
- To be familiar with information from other sources (e.g. Local Authority, OFSTED).
- To provide a termly report to your SGB.

### **Suggested questions to ask**

- What issues arise from Academy self-evaluation that relate to this key stage and what plans do we have to address them?
- What progress are we making towards implementing plans and how will we assess the impact?
- In what particular ways does the Key Stage contribute to achieving statutory and other targets?
- How is pupil progress monitored and assessed and how well do pupils know their individual targets?
- What areas of staff development are currently being addressed through continuing professional development?
- How does each Academy communicate with and involve parents?