

## Role Description for Governor/Trustee

As per the Governance Handbook, published by the DfE (Department for Education) in January 2017 there are three core functions of a governance board: -

1. Set the School/Academy's vision and values and the strategy for achieving this vision – The vision must always centre on pupil progress and achievement and working alongside senior leaders the board will set objectives to help the school reach its goals.
2. Hold school leaders to account for the educational performance and effectiveness of the school/academy – robust accountability for staff through performance management, educational performance for pupils through rigorous analysis of performance data.
3. Ensuring the school/academy's financial success and probity – overview of the effective use of the school/academy financial resources in regard to value for money and outcomes for pupils.

### **Responsibilities**

- Develop the school/trust's vision and strategy
- Establish and set a culture of high educational standards, which promotes staff and pupil wellbeing
- Curriculum –
  - Academies - Ensure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
  - Maintained schools - Ensure the school follows the National Curriculum, and that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), can access the curriculum
- Monitor provision for pupils with SEND
- Monitor educational performance of the school's/trust's academies, using a range of data sources
- Ensure stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff and the local community) are informed and consulted as appropriate
- Approve the budget for the school/academy trust (where relevant, for academies within the trust)
- Monitor and evaluate the school/trust's financial performance
- Approve and review school/trust policies, and hold staff to account for their implementation
- Ensure the school/trust is compliant with legal requirements, including that all statutory policies and documents are in place
- Carry out the appointment and performance management of the –
  - Maintained schools – Headteacher
  - Academies - Principal or Chief Executive

- Monitor, evaluate and approve the school/trust's staffing structure(s)
- Monitor health and safety in the school/academy/across the trust
- Work in co-operation –
  - In an Academy with professional advisors having regard to any guidance they issue
  - In a multi-academy trust, in addition to working with professional advisors, work with those involved in local academy governance, supporting and holding them to account
  - In a maintained school with the LA (local authority), having regard to any guidance it issues

## **Skills and experience**

As outlined in the competency framework for effective governance published by the DfE in January 2017 and summarised below

### Essential:

- Critical listening and ability to ask effective questions
- Strategic thinking
- Excellent communication
- Problem-solving and analysis

### Desirable

- Understanding of data
- Finance and/or accounting knowledge
- HR experience
- Knowledge of education
- Leadership and management skills
- Risk management skills
- Legal expertise (and for academies particular knowledge in charity law)
- Marketing and communications skills

## **Time commitment**

The time commitment for those in governance will vary. However, all governors/trustees must attend at least 3 meetings of the full board per year. Generally, the term of office is 4 years unless stated otherwise in the articles of association (academies) instruments of government (maintained schools) terms of reference (local governance boards in multi-academy trusts).

In addition, governors/trustees sit on a committee focused on an area they have knowledge of, or are particularly interested in, for example the finance committee. Committees generally meet at least 3 times a year but this can vary and be more.

Preparation for meetings includes reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders.

You will also be expected to undertake any training required to enable you to discharge your role effectively.

Governors/Trustees (maintained schools, stand-alone academies and local governance committees) are also expected to visit the school while it is open to pupils to undertake their monitoring role at least twice a year but more likely more. Trustees in Multi-Academy Trusts may not visit each academy within the Trust but may visit to familiarise themselves with the academies in the Trust and may also attend meetings of Local Governance Committees for the academies within the Trust.

### **Additional information**

Academies are both charities and companies limited by guarantee. Academy trustees are therefore both charity trustees and corporate directors, and must comply with company and charity law. This includes the academy registering trustees with Companies House as a director.