



## **Local Advisory Board Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 As a charity and company limited by guarantee, the Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees who have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of the academies maintained by the Trust.

1.2 In order to support the effective operation of the Trust and the academies, the Trust Board has established a number of committees to which it has delegated certain powers and functions.

1.3 The Board has established two different types of committee:

Main Board committees which are established to deal with Trust-wide matters such as the Education Performance and Standards Committee (EPSC), and the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC); and

Local Advisory Boards (LABs) which are established by the Trust Board to support the effective operation of the academies at the local level, to provide links to parents and carers and the community, as well as for providing additional scrutiny of how the Trust is managing its academies. The Trust Board has resolved to establish LABs for its academies each as a separate committee of the Trust Board. A LAB may act in respect of two or more academies, if requested by the Trust Board.

1.4 The LABs are:

- A valued point of consultation and representation in the development of Trust policies.
- The recipients of detailed information about how their academies are being managed.
- Tasked with scrutinising management information thus providing assurance to the Trust Board that the academy is:
  - Operating within the ethos and values of the Trust and creating a positive climate for all stakeholders;
  - Working within agreed policies;
  - Meeting the agreed targets;
  - Engaging with stakeholders;

- Acting as an ambassador for the Trust

1.5 The LABs are outlined in the Articles of Association, Articles 100 – 104.

## **2. Membership**

2.1 All LAB members are formally appointed by the Trust, including in circumstances where they are elected by a stakeholder body or co-opted by the LAB.

2.2 Foundation LAB members, in the Church of England academies, represent the historic link with the original church establishment of the academy. As such they are the custodians of its distinctive Christian ethos.

2.3 The Trust may appoint such independent persons as it deems fit to be members – including the Chair.

2.4 Each LAB operating in respect of one academy shall, unless the Trust Board resolve otherwise, have a minimum of seven members and a maximum of thirteen members.

2.5 A LAB operating in respect of two or more academies (a LAB cluster) shall, unless the Trust Board resolve otherwise, have a minimum of seven members and a maximum of fourteen members.

2.6 The membership of each LAB (each a LAB member) shall be as follows (unless the Trust Board resolve otherwise):

- Up to two parent members (elected by the parent body);
- Up to one staff member;
- The Head;
- Up to four persons appointed by the Trust; and
- Up to five other persons co-opted by members of the LAB.

2.7 The membership of a LAB cluster shall be as follows (unless the Trust Board resolve otherwise):

- Up to one parent member per academy (elected by the parent body);
- Up to one staff member per academy;
- Up to one Head per academy;
- Up to one centrally appointed member per academy;
- Up to one co-opted member per academy; and
- Staff members (including Heads) cannot exceed 30% of the LAB membership.

## 2.8 Church academies

For previously voluntary aided academies<sup>1</sup>, all LAB members (except elected parent and staff members) are appointed by the Trust Board with the consent of the Diocesan Corporate Member, and sign an undertaking to the Diocesan Corporate Member to uphold the designated religious character of the academy. There is 50% church representation.

For previously voluntary controlled academies<sup>2</sup>, there is 25% church representation and the foundation LAB members are appointed by the Trust Board with the consent of the Diocesan Corporate Member, and all LAB members sign an undertaking to the Diocesan Corporate Member to uphold the designated religious character of the academy.

- 2.9 All LAB members on their appointment or election, and before exercising any duties, give a written undertaking to the Trust Board, and, for former VA and VC academies, the foundation LAB members and the Diocesan Corporate Member, to uphold the Object of the Trust.
- 2.10 The Trustees, in all circumstances, shall determine all matters relating to an election of parent LAB members, including any question of whether a person is a parent of a registered pupil at an academy.
- 2.11 When a vacancy arises, the LAB Support Officer and the Head(s) will write to all parents at the academies in question seeking parents to nominate themselves for the vacancy.
- 2.12 Nominees will be asked to provide a personal statement identifying their skills and suitability for the role.
- 2.13 In the event that the number of suitably experienced nominees equals or is less than the number of vacancies on the LAB, the LAB can choose to appoint all (or any) of those nominated. If there are more nominees than places available, the LAB Support Officer and Head(s) will write to all parents at the academies in question asking them to vote for their preferred candidate.
- 2.14 The LAB members may co-opt three members and two staff whose skills match areas in the Academy Trust Governance Guide.
- 2.15 When a foundation LAB member vacancy arises, the LAB Support Officer will coordinate the process to recruit, with reference to the skills audit and the requirement to ensure that the breadth of foundation appointments is faithful to the Anglican heritage. The Trust should ensure that there is sufficient Anglican communicant representation at the Trust Board.

Foundation LAB member appointments require Diocesan Board of Education

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<sup>1</sup> VA Voluntary aided, a state funded school in [England and Wales](#) in which a [foundation](#) or [trust](#) (usually a religious organisation) contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school. In most cases the foundation or trust owns the buildings.

<sup>2</sup> VC Voluntary controlled, a state funded school in [England and Wales](#) in which a [foundation](#) or [trust](#) (usually a Christian denomination) has some formal influence in the running of the school. Such schools have less autonomy than [voluntary aided schools](#), in which the foundation pays part of any building costs.

consent.

Foundation LAB members must fall within one of the following:

- A regular member of the Church of England who is committed to upholding the ethos and values of the Church of England foundations of the church schools in the Trust
- A regular member of one of the member churches of 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland' who is committed to upholding the ethos and values of the Church of England foundations of the church academies in the Trust
- In exceptional circumstances a person who is not a regular member of one of these churches, but is committed to upholding the ethos and values of the Church of England foundations of the church schools in the Trust.

A reference from the relevant church leader must be provided by everyone putting their name forward for consideration as a foundation LAB member. If this is not achievable, the nominee must be interviewed by the Diocesan Corporate Member. It is the role of the local clergy to interpret for their community the word 'regular' in relation to their church membership.

Any person employed by the Trust is not eligible to be a foundation LAB member.

- 2.16 The term of office for any LAB member shall be four years, save that this time limit shall not apply to a Head. Subject to remaining eligible, any member may put themselves forward for reappointment or re-election (as the case may be).

### **Chairs**

- 2.17 The term Chair refers to the person appointed under 2.3 as chair of the relevant LAB.
- 2.18 The LAB members shall at the first meeting of each academic year appoint a LAB member to act as Chair of the LAB.
- 2.19 The Chair cannot be re-elected to the position for any longer than three years.
- 2.20 The LAB members will elect a temporary replacement from among the members present at the meeting in the absence of the Chair.
- 2.21 No member of academy staff may be appointed to the role of Chair.

### **Vice Chairs**

- 2.22 The term Vice Chair refers to the person appointed as Vice Chair of the relevant LAB.

- 2.23 The LAB members shall at the first meeting of each academic year appoint a LAB member to act as Vice Chair of the LAB.
- 2.24 No member of academy staff may be appointed to the role of Vice Chair.

### **3. Quorum**

- 3.1 Meetings attended by five or more full members of the LAB shall be deemed as quorate providing that the majority of those attending are not employees.

### **4. Meetings**

- 4.1 The LAB will meet as often as is necessary to fulfil its responsibilities, but a minimum of six times a year, and will review the frequency of meetings as necessary or on the advice of the Trust.
- 4.2 The Chair of the LAB shall ensure that a governance professional is provided to take minutes at meetings.
- 4.3 Any resolution at a meeting of a LAB must be determined by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting on the matter.
- 4.4 Each LAB member present in person shall be entitled to one vote.
- 4.5 Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- 4.6 A register of attendance shall be kept for each LAB meeting and published annually on the relevant academy's website.
- 4.7 LABs may invite attendance at meetings from persons who are not members to assist or advise on a particular matter or range of issues. Any member of the Trust Board or the executive team may also attend and speak at LAB meetings.
- 4.8 References to the Chair shall in the absence of the Chair be deemed to be references to the Chair of the relevant LAB meeting.

### **5. Remit and Responsibilities of the LAB**

- 5.1 To be responsible for the matters as set out in the Scheme of Delegation 2024 – 25.
- 5.2 Authorised by the Trust Board to carry on any activity authorised by these terms of reference and seek any appropriate information that it properly requires to carry out its role from any senior employee of the Trust, and all

senior employees shall be directed to cooperate with any request made.

- 5.3 To demonstrate appropriate support and challenge by holding academy leadership to account for academic performance, quality of care and provision.
- 5.4 To monitor and support the academy in terms of learning, standards, safety and wellbeing. This includes identifying LAB members that take on an area of focused responsibility for supporting and informing the LAB in the areas of Safeguarding and Children Looked After, Special Educational Needs and Disability, Health and Safety and Curriculum.
- 5.5 To consider the performance of spending against budget as aligned to the educational performance. The LAB is not responsible for the performance of the academy budget but for supporting and challenging the Head to target budgeted spend aligned to the educational outcomes of the school.
- 5.6 To support the academy's senior management staff to deal with parental complaints pursuant to the Trust policy on parental complaints and support the Head(s) in recruitment and selection, exclusions, grievance and disciplinary processes where appropriate.
- 5.7 To review the decisions of Heads of other academies within the Trust in exclusion cases where appropriate and, if requested, recruitment panels.
- 5.8 To record visits to the academy / academies both during school hours (with prior arrangement with the Head) and for evening events.
- 5.9 To draw any significant recommendations and matters of concern to the attention of the Trust Board via the LAB Support Officer / Clerk.
- 5.10 To nominate a member to sit on the Admissions Committee.
- 5.11 The establishment of any sub committees other than ad hoc working groups required to deal with specific issues must be agreed in advance with the Trust Chief Executive Officer and have appropriate terms of reference. The Trust does not envisage the need for LABs to have sub committees.
- 5.12 Foundation LAB members

As representatives of the church's role in the academies within the Trust, foundation LAB members:

- Fully support, cherish, preserve and develop the distinctive Christian ethos of the church academy, ensuring a distinctive Christian vision and values which lead to effective practice and outcomes
- Take an active role in the Trust's self evaluations of church academies' progress against the SIAMS<sup>3</sup> schedule
- Ensure that collective worship and religious education at the church academies follow the appropriate guidelines and / or syllabus and are appropriately monitored
- Ensure that collective worship at the church academies is in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England

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<sup>3</sup> Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

- Ensure that the distinctive Christian ethos of church academies is encouraged and supported through the local community and reflected in policies and protocols, curriculum and activities
- Ensure that the School Improvement Plan includes a strategy for the development of areas reflected in church academies' SIAMS self evaluation documents
- Support and challenge the leadership within the church academies in their links with the wider parish and community

In an academy, the LAB members undertake the responsibilities delegated to them by the Scheme of Delegation.

It is the responsibility of foundation LAB members to understand the Scheme of Delegation and to raise any issues relating specifically to Christian distinctiveness with the foundation Trustees and foundation Members, including the Diocesan Corporate Member, via the LAB Support Officer / Clerk.

## **6. Conduct of LAB members**

- 6.1 All LAB members shall observe at all times the provisions of the Governance Code of Conduct.

## **7. Members' interests**

- 7.1 LAB members are required to declare any business or other interests in any item being discussed at a meeting.
- 7.2 Each LAB member, if present at a meeting, should disclose their interest, withdraw from the meeting and not vote on a matter if:
- there may be a conflict between their interests and the interests of any of the academies or the Trust;
  - there is reasonable doubt about their ability to act impartially in relation to a matter where a fair hearing is required; or
  - they have a personal interest (this is where they and / or a close relative will be directly affected by the decision of the LAB in relation to that matter) in a matter.
- 7.3 LAB members who raise a complaint with the academy or Trust must step down from the LAB until resolution of the process. The return date will be decided in consultation with the CEO.

## 8. Disqualification and removal of LAB members

- 8.1 A person shall be ineligible for appointment to a LAB and, if already appointed, shall immediately cease to be a member if the relevant individual:
- is or becomes disqualified from holding office under the Trust's Articles of Association;
  - is or becomes disqualified from holding office as a governor of a school or academy;
  - is included in the list of teachers or workers considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people;
  - is barred from any regulated activity relating to children;
  - is or becomes bankrupt or makes any arrangement or composition with their creditors generally; or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
  - is convicted of any criminal offence (other than minor offences under the Road Traffic Acts or the Road Safety Acts for which a fine or non-custodial penalty is imposed or any conviction which is a spent conviction for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974);
  - has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school / academy premises during the five years prior to or since appointment or election as a LAB member;
  - refuses to an application being made to the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) for a criminal records check;
  - commits a serious breach of the Trust's Governance Code of Conduct or any standing order or protocol implemented by the Trust Board, as determined by the Trust;
  - is absent without the permission of the LAB from all their meetings held within a period of six months;
  - resigns their office by notice in writing to the relevant Chair;
  - in the case of a Head, they cease to be the Head;
  - their term of office expires and they are not re-appointed.
- 8.2 The Trustees shall have the right at their sole discretion to remove or suspend (on such terms as they see fit) any LAB member by written notice to the member and the relevant Chair.
- 8.3 The suspension from employment duties of any LAB member who is an employee of the Trust shall have the effect of suspending their membership of the Committee.
- 8.4 Any LAB member who is subject to a banning order issued by the Head shall be deemed to be suspended from the LAB for the duration of the ban.
- 8.5 The Chair of the Trust Board may suspend a LAB member for up to 20 school days where it is necessary to undertake an investigation into any



alleged breach of the Governance Code of Conduct.

## **9. Policies, compliance and monitoring**

- 9.1 The LAB will review and be consulted on Trust policies in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation 2024 – 25.
- 9.2 The LAB has a responsibility to ensure Trust policies are implemented by the academy.
- 9.3 The LAB is responsible for receiving reports and presentations from academy leaders and visiting the academy. Monitoring responsibilities should be linked to the school's priorities.

## **10. Reporting procedures**

- 10.1 Within seven days of each meeting each LAB will produce, and the LAB Chair agree, draft minutes of its meetings.
- 10.2 The Chair and Vice Chair of the LAB shall report on the LAB's work, as members of the Chairs' Group.
- 10.3 The LAB should carry out an annual skills audit and self evaluation.

These terms of reference may only be amended by the Trust Board.

The functions, duties and proceedings of set out in these terms of reference shall also be subject to any regulations made by the Trust Board from time to time.

The Trust Board will review these terms of reference together with the membership of the LABs at least once every twelve months.

**Reviewed by the LABs in July 2024**

**Approved by the Trust Board on 16 September 2024**