



Governance Review Policy and Procedure

Version 2.1

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Name and Title of Author:	Lisa Pipes, Director of HR and Governance
Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:	Trust Board
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POLICY STATEMENT

We are here to make great schools and happier, stronger communities so that people have better lives. We do this by:

- Always doing what is right
- Trusting in each other and standing shoulder to shoulder
- Doing what we know makes the difference

Doing what is right means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others and being honest, open and transparent.

The Trust is a responsive, collaborative organisation, which achieves its strategic and operational goals within a transparent governance framework. At the heart of our organisation is the non-executive team. Non-executives are volunteers who bring knowledge and expertise, oversight, support and challenge to our schools and the Trust, and they do this, not for personal material benefit, but for the greater public good and in particular to improve the life chances of the students in our schools. We appreciate the contributions our Members, Trustees and Governors make to improve our schools and to ensure the Trust continues to thrive in a sustainable, ethical way. We recognise that the commitment and care shown by our Members, Trustees and Governors is fundamental to the success of our students.

The purpose of governance in the Trust is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create effective accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The relationship between the Trust Board, the Executive Team and the Local Governing Bodies is characterised as a partnership to realise a common vision and common purpose. The relationship between the tiers of governance is also based on the principles of:

1. No duplication of governance
2. Governance should be as close as possible to the point of impact of decision-making

The Governance Framework provides clarity as to who the decision makers are for different levels of decisions. Effectiveness of both management and governance is supported through clarity over who holds the decision-making responsibility and who supports and advises the decision makers.

The Members oversee the performance of the Trust. They hold the Trust Board to account for the effective governance of the Trust and assess if governance is performing well and, as such, they ensure that the purpose of the Trust and its charitable objects are being met. They hold the Board to account by hearing directly from the Board once a year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Trustees provide Members with information via the AGM, which assures Members of the effectiveness of governance across the Trust. Chairs of LGBs and the Board facilitate an effective review each year, which:

- acknowledges the impact and value added by the various groups to schools and the Trust
- considers the skills mix of each group, assessing any skills gaps which may be addressed through development, future appointments and movements
- governance succession planning, including a review of terms of office, strengths and skills gaps
- informs governance development plans

This policy details an approach to performance review, which places Trustees and Governors in the driving seat, providing them with opportunities to celebrate success, acknowledge individual contributions and group achievements, and to strive for continuous learning and development, utilising strengths and building on success.

1. SCOPE

This policy applies to Trustees and Governors of the Education Alliance.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Members** are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

The **Chairs** of LGBs and the Board are responsible for facilitating governance reviews, considering skills gaps, informing succession plans and development plans, enriching Trustee and Governor experiences, ensuring effective governance exists across the Trust, providing Members with appropriate levels of assurance.

3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Education Alliance is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines
- Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its student population and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged

4. PRINCIPLES OF REVIEWS

The Trust aims to ensure Trustees and Governors have the information, resources and support they need to perform at their best. At the end of each academic year, Trustees and Governors are encouraged to consider:

- the impact governance has had on the school and/Trust that year
- the contribution they have made
- the opportunities/challenges they have faced
- their training and development needs
- their strengths, knowledge, skills and expertise, ensuring they are fully utilised in their governance role

We all strive to be the best we can be and to continually learn and develop.

5. OPTIONS

Chairs can facilitate self-evaluation/review processes in a number of ways, as fits best for their group and their circumstances. Options include the following:

- Chairs to facilitate a self-evaluation session with their Board/LGB (the Head of School and/or Director of HR and Governance could assist), encouraging reflection and honest, open discussions, focusing on the bullet points detailed in section 3 of this policy. The key elements of the session can be captured in the minutes and shared with the Trust Board/Members.
- Chairs can ask Trustees/Governors to complete a self-evaluation form. Trustees/Governors also have the option to seek a further discussion with their Chair where they feel it would be helpful. A drop-in session may help facilitate this approach, and the self-evaluation form (appendix 1) may be used to assist Chairs in gathering information to enable an effective and accurate review to be undertaken each year.

- Chairs may prefer to hold individual meetings with Trustees/Governors (e.g. all or those reaching the end of their office, or those who have been in office for a short while). They may then need to consider with the Director of HR and Governance mechanisms for collating this information.

6. REVIEW CYCLE

It is useful to review governance effectiveness and impact at least once a year, usually towards the end of the academic year in readiness for the year ahead. This allows for consolidation of learning, succession planning for the coming year and a learning and development needs analysis to be undertaken, which can inform the governance development programme for the year ahead. Chairs are encouraged to undertake a review with their team, seeking advice, support and input from the Director of HR and Governance and input from the Head of School/CEO has required. The Director of HR and Governance will collate information to be presented to the Members at the AGM.

7. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

Effectiveness and compliance of this Policy will be monitored on an annual basis by the HR Department.

8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

- The Trust's Governance Framework
- The Trust's Ethical Leadership Framework

9. REVIEW

This Policy and Procedure will be initially reviewed within one year of the date of implementation with Members, the Trust Board and Chairs of LGBs.

Self-Review Template

Describe the contributions the team has made this year that you are most proud of.

Describe the contributions you have made in your governance role this year that you are most proud of.

Were there any influencing factors that helped you and/or your governance team have a positive impact this year?

Has anything enabled or prevented you from performing at your best this year?

Have any particular tools and/or resources helped you perform at your best?

Are there any additional tools or resources you would find useful for the year ahead?

To become even better in your governance role, what do you want to continue to do, do more of, do better or do differently?

--

Do you have any learning/development needs that we haven't met yet, or that are emerging due to changes nationally/locally? (e.g. new OFSTED framework)

--

Are there any strengths, knowledge, skills or expertise you have that are not being fully utilised in your governance role?

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To help us undertaken a skills analysis, please tick if you feel you have expertise in any of the following areas. We expect that you may have one particular area of knowledge and expertise, so please feel able to tick one box.

Expertise in using data to interpret/evaluate performance and identify trends to target improvement.	
Experience of curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment.	
Experience of providing challenge to leaders on monitoring and improving behaviour and safety.	
Knowledge of safeguarding, including Prevent.	
An understanding of special education needs and disabilities (SEND).	
Financial management expertise including allocation/budget monitoring and financial solvency.	
Experience of ensuring that organisational financial obligations are met and adequate financial controls are in place.	
Business development experience/expertise.	
Health and safety knowledge/expertise.	
Knowledge/experience of procurement/purchasing.	
Experience of property/estates/facilities management.	
Knowledge/experience of HR policy and processes.	
Experience of school sector HR policy and processes, including national terms and conditions.	
Knowledge and experience of change management (e.g. overseeing culture change/mergers/organisational restructures).	
Experience of marketing, media and public relations.	
Experience of preparing for and responding to external oversight.	
Experience of inspection and oversight in the school sector.	

Group Review Template

Describe the contributions the team has made this year that you are most proud of.

Were there any influencing factors that helped your governance team have a positive impact this year?

Has anything enabled or prevented your team from performing at your best this year?

Have any particular tools and/or resources helped your team perform at your best?

Are there any additional tools or resources you would find useful for the year ahead?

To become even better as a governance team, is there anything your team wants to do more of, do better or do differently?

Does your governance team have any learning/development needs that haven't been met yet, or that are emerging due to changes nationally/locally? (e.g. new OFSTED framework)

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Are there any strengths, knowledge, skills or expertise members of your team have that are not being fully utilised?

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To help us undertaken a skills analysis, please complete the column on the right, detailing which of your team has expertise in the following areas. Don't worry if you don't have names for all the areas specified.

Expertise in using data to interpret/evaluate performance and identify trends to target improvement.	
Experience of curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment.	
Experience of providing challenge to leaders on monitoring and improving behaviour and safety.	
Knowledge of safeguarding, including Prevent.	
An understanding of special education needs and disabilities (SEND).	
Financial management expertise including allocation/budget monitoring and financial solvency.	
Experience of ensuring that organisational financial obligations are met and adequate financial controls are in place.	
Business development experience/expertise.	
Health and safety knowledge/expertise.	
Knowledge/experience of procurement/purchasing.	
Experience of property/estates/facilities management.	
Knowledge/experience of HR policy and processes.	
Experience of school sector HR policy and processes, including national terms and conditions.	
Knowledge and experience of change management (e.g. overseeing culture change/mergers/organisational restructures).	
Experience of marketing, media and public relations.	
Experience of preparing for and responding to external oversight.	
Experience of inspection and oversight in the school sector.	