

# The Active Learning Trust

## INDUCTION OF NEW GOVERNORS

### Checklist for Clerks & Chairs

NAME:

WHAT	WHO	Date Completed
Welcome Letter to be sent to new governor	ALT	
Welcome Pack to be sent to new governors	ALT	
Commitment of Undertaking Form	ALT	
Roles & Responsibilities Document	ALT	
New governor to be offered 'buddy' or 'mentor'	Chair	
Contact Details of the LGB to be sent to new governor	Clerk	
Forward list of meeting dates	Clerk	
Update Website to include new governor	Clerk	
Allocate new governor to committee	Chair	
Complete Skills Audit	ALT	
Assess training needs (following completion of Skills Audit)	Training Link Gov	
DBS Check	Head	
Register of Interests Form	ALT	
NGA Info.	ALT	

# The Active Learning Trust

## What School Governors Do

A school governing body has a strategic role in the development of the school, but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues – that is the role of the Head Teacher.

**Governors have three core areas:**

### **1. Provide a Strategic View**

To help set and maintain the broad framework within which the Head Teacher and the Staff should run the school

### **2. Act as a Critical Friend**

To provide the Head Teacher with support and offer advice and information but also provide some challenge. The governing body is there to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness and governors should therefore be prepared to ask challenging questions

### **3. To Ensure Accountability**

The Head Teacher and staff report to the governing body on the school's performance – both academically and financially. In turn the governing body is accountable to all stakeholders on the school's overall performance.

# **Welcome Pack for New Governors**

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**Contents:**

1. A welcome letter from the Chief Executive
2. Governor support and training
3. Governor roles and responsibilities
4. Governor Code of Conduct
5. Jargon Buster – acronymns translated and some useful websites

## 1. Welcome to the role of Governor of an Active Learning Trust (ALT) Academy.

Thank you for joining the local governing body (LGB) of your ALT academy and I really do appreciate your interest and commitment to make a difference to the life chances of the young people your academy serves. One of the great strengths of local governing bodies is that individuals bring their own areas of expertise, skills and knowledge to the team and we will work together to explore the areas in which your skills can be put to best use for the benefit of the academy and most importantly, pupils.

Although it can seem quite daunting to take on the role of governor, it is part of the Trust's role to ensure that you gain confidence and enjoy the experience. We've therefore put together this short pack to help support your induction by ensuring that you become a fully informed and confident governor as quickly as possible.

Each ALT academy has a local governing body (LGB) that has a set of delegated powers from the main ALT board. These delegated powers vary according to the situation of each academy and are agreed with the chair of the LGB. The local governing body is accountable to the ALT board through the chair and minutes of its meetings. From time to time LGB chairs will be invited to full ALT board meetings to talk about progress at their academies and sometimes an ALT board member will sit on the local governing body, or even chair it if needed.

It is ALT policy to keep the size of local governing bodies to about 11 for primary academies and 13 for secondary ones. This is to ensure that meetings remain focused on the core business of the LGB and is done in as efficient and effective a way as possible. The composition therefore normally is as follows:

### Primary Academy

- Chair
- Headteacher/Principal
- An elected support staff representative
- An elected teacher representative
- 2 elected parent representatives
- 5 Trust appointed governors from the local community

Secondary Academies follow the same pattern but with 7 local representatives to reflect their larger size and wider reach.

The Trust appointed governors can be nominated by the academy or others in the community or simply put themselves forward. In any case, they need to complete a short application process, declare their commitment to supporting the aims and ethos of the academy and the Trust, and normally meet with a member of the Trust's management team, before being appointed.

ALT local governing bodies normally meet once each half term. The first meeting of the term will normally be a business and will often focus on issues of teaching and learning, sometimes with input from key members of staff. There will usually be two sub-committees that deal with matters such as personnel and/or finance respectively. In addition to these there are standing statutory panels for staff or pupil discipline and appeals but these only meet when required to do so. The sub-committee structure will depend on the academy's current situation and the expertise of the various members of the local board. Training will be provided, either from the Trust itself or through any governor service provision that the academy purchases.

Decisions are always made after full discussion in a committee or full governing body meeting apart from rare occasions when the chair may need to make an urgent decision in conjunction with the Headteacher/Principal and/or a member of the Trust Board or leadership team. It is important that as far as possible, all views are heard, shared and respected but equally governors need to understand that there is a collective responsibility for their decisions. This means that even if a governor disagrees with a decision, he or she remains part of the corporate body that made the decision and must respect that. Naturally, there are times when you will be discussing sensitive or confidential issues and all governors also need to understand and respect the need for confidentiality at such times.

What next?

Please look at the rest of this pack and use it as a reference point. Think about areas that you would like to know more about and consider governor roles you would be interested in finding out more about. Think about a focus for an induction visit to the academy. For example, do you wish to have an in-depth look at a particular subject area, or an overview of academy life, or meet with a senior member of staff to gain an insight into their role and how they view the role of governors? Contact your Headteacher/Principal to arrange a personalized visit.

Thank you again for giving your time to this vital role and I look forward to working with you.

*Gary Peile*

Gary Peile

Chief Executive

The Active Learning Trust.

## 2. Governor support and training

This will be developed initially over the first term of the new LGB and then be on-going as the needs of governors become evident or change over time, perhaps in response to national or local priorities. It will include input from ALT staff and any local service providers who have regular programmes of governor updates such as Governor Services or the HR & Personnel service provider engaged to assist the school, model documents and webinar briefings etc. The sessions will be well focused and relevant, and tailored to your needs; allowing you to come to terms with the nuances of the role and the way the educational system works – including educational jargon.

Hopefully, you're in academy governance for the long-term. There are training courses that will develop your expertise and knowledge in specific areas and prepare you for taking on a key role within the governing body. Some of the courses are also available online which gives you flexibility about when to complete the training.

## 3. Governor roles and responsibilities

### **Where can I make the best contribution?**

Most people who decide to become academy governors want to make a difference and contribute in a way that will benefit the young people attending the academy. We can achieve this aim by working to support the leadership of the academy and by ensuring we adopt best practice in governance. It is important to remember that the Headteacher/Principal is responsible for the day to day running and organisation of the academy; governors provide quality assurance and strategic direction.

The key role of the full governing body is to:

- work with the Headteacher/Principal and her or his senior team to provide strategic direction for the academy
- work with the Headteacher/Principal and her or his senior team to ensure the ethos and values of the academy are fit for purpose and in accordance with those of the Active Learning Trust.
- be a critical friend to the academy
- provide challenge and support as appropriate to ensure effective leadership and management of the academy
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the academy in delivery of the agreed strategic aims
- ensure all the statutory requirements of governance are delivered

You will achieve this by:

- working as a full governing body to ensure that academy leaders are held to account for the progress of pupils at the academy
- ensuring the academy has policies that will deliver the strategic aims
- taking on individual roles and responsibilities as governors to monitor specific areas within the academy and to develop expertise in critical areas such as safeguarding/child protection.

You are becoming part of a team and we wish to ensure that we both utilise your skills effectively and also develop your knowledge and understanding of the role of effective governance in ensuring a high quality education and experience for all the young people and staff in the academy.

### **Documentation**

Before every governing body meeting, papers will be issued that you at least ten working days in advance. You will need to read and be familiar with these and reading documents in advance of the meeting, you can prepare questions for the academy leadership to seek clarification or delve deeper into the delivery of aims. These should be submitted to the clerk at least five days before the meeting to allow time for answers to be formulated. Papers will range from a Headteacher/Principal's report to a policy to be adopted or the latest budget forecast or assessment data on how pupils in the academy are progressing. The range is large and no one governor is expected to be an expert in all areas.

As well as the papers issued before meetings, there are some key documents relating to the academy and its governance that you will need to be familiar with:

- Academy Action Plan (development plan)
- Most recent Ofsted report or monitoring visit report
- Ofsted data dashboard
- Governor code of Conduct

Familiarity with these documents allows you to develop knowledge of the shared vision for the academy, its current strengths and weaknesses and the steps that are being taken to improve outcomes for pupils. Guidance about how to access and use these documents will be provided during the course of the autumn term.

Education is a world of acronyms and even seasoned practitioners are sometimes unable to unscramble some that are in current use. A list of such acronyms is included below and, while there is no suggestion that you should learn them all, the occasional run through the list might be helpful. Also, don't be afraid to challenge the use of acronyms that you don't understand during LGB or Committee meetings.

## 4. Code of Conduct for Governors

(Adapted from the National Governor Association's Code of Practice)

**The Local Governing Body should adopt the following principles and procedures:**

### **Commitment**

We accept that being a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy and we agree to:

- be active and involved members of the governing body, attend regularly, and share responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups
- get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in academy activities
- attend training and take responsibility for our own learning and development as a governor
- prepare for meetings by reading paperwork beforehand

### **Confidentiality**

We recognise the need to observe complete confidentiality when required to do so by the governing body, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students and we will:

- not divulge information about members of staff or pupils inappropriately (including via social media)
- exercise great care if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue of the academy arises outside the governing body
- declare an interest if an item under discussion at any full or committee meeting of governors impinges upon our personal, family or financial situation

### **Conduct**

We agree to work as a member of the team at all times and be loyal to collective decisions; we will:

- encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means we will not speak out *against* majority decisions in public (or private) outside the governing body
- only seek to act on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so
- follow the procedures established by the governing body, when making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy
- follow the code of practice for visits established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher/Principal when making visits to academy
- always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy
- seek to develop effective working relationships with the head, staff and parents, and other relevant agencies and the community

## **Communication**

- As governors we owe a duty of mutual trust and confidence to our academy, and to each other, which may be breached if unsuitable material is contained in any communication or correspondence, including all types of electronic communication, personal blogs, websites and social networking sites
- We will gain the agreement of the Chair and Headteacher/Principal prior to posting any content (written, vocal or visual) to the internet which identifies us as members of the governing body, or before speaking to the media.

## **General**

- We are responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures of the academy
- We recognise that the Headteacher/Principal is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the academy and the implementation of the curriculum
- We accept that all governors have equal status, and, although appointed by different groups, our overriding concern will be the welfare of the academy as a whole
- We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfill all that is expected of a good employer
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect pupils and other academies.

## **Governor roles**

**Chair of governors** - to lead the team of governors in order to enable it to function effectively and efficiently.

**Vice-chair of governors** – to support the chair and deputise for the chair as required.

**Child protection or safeguarding governor** - to ensure that child protection is receiving proper consideration and that the governing body is discharging its statutory duties.

**SEN governor** - to champion the issue of special educational needs within the work of the governing body and to have specific oversight of the academy's arrangements and provision for meeting pupils' special educational needs.

To consider, in addition to above roles, attaching governors to curriculum areas

## **Committee membership**

Membership is also open to one or more committees depending on the structure of the LGB and personal interest. Governors are also asked to join one of the following panels should the need arise:

Pupil discipline panel – considers decisions made by the Headteacher/Principal to permanently exclude a pupil

Staff dismissal panel – considers staff dismissal cases e.g. redundancy

Staff dismissals appeal panel – considers appeals following from decisions made by the staff dismissal panel

Pay review appeals panel – considers appeals against teacher’s pay decisions made by the Headteacher/Principal

Employee grievance or disciplinary panel/appeals panel – to consider staff grievance or discipline matters or appeals in accordance with the HR Policies in operation.

## **5. A list of key acronyms and useful websites**

DfE: Department for Education

A levels – Advanced level examinations (usually taken at age 17/18)

AfL – Assessment for Learning

AHT – Assistant Headteacher

APL – Accreditation of prior learning

APP – Assessing Pupil Progress

AS level – Advanced subsidiary examination

AST – Advanced skills teacher

CAF – Common Assessment Framework

CPD – Continuing professional Development

DDP – Department development Plan

DHT – Deputy Headteacher

EAL – English as an Additional Language

ECM – Every Child Matters

EWO – Education Welfare Officer

EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage

FD – First Diploma

FE – Further Education

FSPs – Foundation Stage Profile points

GCSE – General Certificate Secondary Education

GTCE – General Teaching Council for England

HE – Higher Education

HOD – Head of Department

HLTA – Higher Level Teaching Assistant

IB – International Baccalaureate

ICT – Information Communication Technology

IEP – Individual Education Plan

INSET – In-service Educational Training

ITT – Initial Teacher training

KS – Key Stage, e.g. KS2 Key Stage 2

LA – Local Authority

LSA – Learning Support Assistant

NC – National Curriculum

ND – National Diploma

NQF – National Qualification Framework

NVQ – National Vocational Qualification

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education

PPA – Planning Preparation Assessment

QCDA – Qualification Curriculum Development Agency

QTS – Qualified Teacher status

SATs - Standard Assessment Tasks

SDP – School Development Plan

SEAL – Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning

SEF – Self Evaluation Form

SEN – Special Education Needs

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

SMT – Senior Management Team

TA – Teaching Assistant

UCAS – Universities & Colleges Admissions Service

### **Department for Education**

Information, news and current consultations from the Department for Education

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

### **Governornet**

Updates on the Governors' Guide to the Law and other publications

[www.governornet.co.uk](http://www.governornet.co.uk)

### **Governorline**

Free, confidential advice, information and support to School Governors, clerks and individuals involved directly in the governance of maintained schools in England.

[www.governorline.info](http://www.governorline.info)

### **National Governors' Association (NGA)**

Represents school governors in England, including lobbying ministers and policy makers.

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

### **Ofsted**

Matters relating to inspection of schools and Ofsted inspection reports

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

### **Information about external links from The Active Learning Trust**

The Active Learning Trust website includes links to websites provided by other organisations.

The Trust is not responsible for the content of these sites and accepts no liability for material within them.

**THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST**  
**APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS TO LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES**  
**OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING TRUST SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES**  
**COMMITMENT OF UNDERTAKING**

The Active Learning Trust recognises and appreciates the level of undertaking involved in becoming a member of the Local Governing Body of one of our schools or academies.

The Trust places great reliance on the willingness, skills and abilities offered by the governors it appoints in carrying out the important functions of the Local Governing Body and in representing both the school or academy and the Trust in delivering positive outcomes for the pupils, students and families we serve, and in protecting and enhancing the reputation of the school or academy, its community and the Active Learning Trust as a whole.

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation in operation for the Active Learning Trust, we ask that all our governors positively and willingly declare the following commitment to their work with us;-

- To use their best endeavours to utilise their skills and abilities to the benefit of the school/academy in which they operate and to the Active Learning Trust as a whole
- To attend meetings events and functions of the Governing Body as regularly as they are practically able so to do
- To be thorough accurate and diligent in all their undertakings on behalf of the school/academy and the Trust
- To abide by the policies, protocols and procedures which apply to the school/academy and across the Trust as a whole
- To support and uphold the aims and vision of the Active Learning Trust as a force for educational improvement.

I ..... as an appointed governor of \_\_\_\_\_ School do declare that I will support and uphold the undertaking requested above.

Signed

Full Name

Date

## Constitution Regulations

### Covering the Qualifications and Disqualifications of Governors

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election or appointment and cannot hold more than one governorship at the same school.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor or associate member if he or she:

- is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order or an interim order;
- has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to:
  - a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Act 1986
  - a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
  - a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
  - an order made under Section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a County Court administration order);
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the Charity Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under Section 34 of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from participating in the management or control of any body;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children;
- is disqualified from working with children or subject to a direction under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002;
- is disqualified from registration for childminding or providing day care;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- has received a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before or since becoming a governor;
- has received a prison sentence of 2½ years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
- has at any time received a prison sentence of 5 years or more;
- has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor;
- is employed at the school for more than 500 hours per academic year if wishing to stand for parent governor at the same school;
- is an elected member of the Local Authority (applies to parent and community governors only).

The *Active Learning* Trust

**ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

*of a*

**Local Governing Body**

*and*

**Individual Governors**

# The Active Learning Trust

This document is designed to assist governing bodies in understanding the role of the governing body and individual governors who undertake specific responsibilities on behalf of the governing body with the school

## **The role of the Local Governing Body (LGB)**

The LGB acts in accordance with the scheme of delegation agreed by the ALT Board. Each LGB should receive the scheme at their first meeting and a copy should be held in each school. This scheme sets out what the Trust board asks the LGB to carry out on its behalf. In essence the role of the LGB (which should then underpin the work of the LGB) can be summarised as follows:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

## **Governor Roles**

Each ALT Local Governing Body has three types of governor – Trust Governors, Parent Governors and Staff Governors. Trust Governors are appointed (the chair is specifically appointed by the Trust board) and Parent and Staff Governors elected.

### **Trust Governors**

Trust Governors have a specific duty to the Trust board, as appointees and that relates to the first bullet point in the role of the governing body. They are the eyes and ears of the Trust board locally and need to ensure that the work of the school is aligned with the agreed vision and values of the Trust and to ensure that the strategic direction of the school is aligned with that of the Trust.

In addition, Local Governing Bodies need to ensure that one of the body takes on a specific role for them. These are outlined below:

## **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

The governing body should have an SEN Governor to champion the issue of special educational needs within the work of the governing body and to have specific oversight of the school's arrangements and provision for meeting special educational needs.

### **Why does the Governing Body need an SEN Governor?**

The Governing Body has some key responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs. Governing bodies should, with the headteacher, decide the school's general policy and approach to meeting pupils' special educational needs.

They must set up appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and oversee the school's work.

In particular, the governing body has a legal duty to:

- Do its best to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs are appropriately catered for;
- Appoint a 'responsible person' to oversee the assessment of individual pupils' needs and to make sure that all staff likely to teach pupils with special needs are aware of those needs;
- Ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for any pupils with special educational needs;
- Ensure that pupils with special educational needs have the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of school life;
- Ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that their child has special educational needs;
- Establish an SEN policy which is publicly available and can be easily understood by parents; and review that policy on a regular basis
- Report on how the school's SEN policy is being implemented and how resources are allocated in the governing body's Annual Report to Parents;
- Ensure that the SEN Code of Practice is followed

**Governing bodies should delegate some of these responsibilities to a named SEN Governor who reports back to the governing body on a regular basis.**

### **What skills and qualities are needed?**

- ✓ An interest in special educational needs
- ✓ Good communication skills, with a willingness to report back verbally at meetings or to provide a brief written report
- ✓ Time and availability – in particular to meet regularly with the SENCO, to visit the school and to take advantage of relevant briefing and training opportunities
- ✓ Enthusiasm and energy
- ✓ A willingness to participate in the development and review of the school's SEN policy

### **What does the role of SEN Governor involve?**

- Developing and maintaining an awareness of special needs provision in the school on behalf of the governing body
- Understand how the responsibilities for SEN provision are shared within the school
- Discuss with school staff the outcomes of the school's monitoring and evaluation of the provision made for pupils with special educational needs;
- Observe at first-hand what happens in school both inside and outside the classroom to ensure that SEN pupils are actively involved in all aspects of school life;
- Take opportunities to meet and talk with parents of pupils with SEN
- Ensure the school keeps you informed about developments in the area of special educational needs, nationally, locally and within the school
- Support the implementation of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy
- Be familiar with the SEN policy and involved in its review and development;
- Agree with the governing body and the headteacher the indicators which should be reported on by the school to the governing body to say whether the policy is working, and the timescale for that reporting
- Ensure that the SEN policy is linked to the School Development Plan and the budget setting process
- Ensure that funds are allocated each year within the school budget specifically to cater for SEN pupils and to support the implementation of the SEN policy; be aware of the various headings under which the schools spends the SEN budget each year (i.e. resources, training, support assistants, SENCO management time, medical time etc.)
- Monitor and evaluate the use of these funds and other resources, considering cost effectiveness and best value for money in terms of increased progress for pupils with SEN

- Encourage the governing body to ensure that all school policies are consistent with the aims of the special educational needs policy
- Sharing information
- Discuss the outcome of school visits with the SEN Coordinator and the headteacher;
  - Report on a termly basis to the full governing body on the implementation of the school's SEN policy;
  - Encourage effective communication with parents on the school's support for pupils with special needs

### **What does the SEN Governor need to know?**

The SEN Governor should aim to meet the Headteacher and SENCO on a termly basis to keep up-to-date with SEN developments within the school and to review the implementation of the SEN policy on an ongoing basis.

A good relationship with the SENCO is key to the effectiveness of the SEN Governor. The sort of issues the SEN Governor might discuss with the SENCO and other school staff will include:

- Current numbers of the SEN register at the different stages (but not their names)
- Identification procedures for pupils with SEN
- Staffing arrangements for pupils with SEN
- Staff training
- Use of resources
- How pupils with SEN are ensured access to the curriculum
- Provision being made for individuals
- Progress on any parts of the School Improvement Plan relating to SEN
- Progress with the implementation of the SEN policy
- Whether statutory reporting requirements are being met
- Liaison with external agencies and support services
- Links with special/mainstream schools
- Communication with parents

***Whilst the SEN Governor is not responsible for the day to day management of special needs provision in the school, he or she may on occasion have access to sensitive information about the circumstances of individual children, particularly in smaller schools. It is essential that the SEN Governor respects the confidentiality of such information.***

### **How should the governing body support the SEN Governor?**

It is important that the governing body both understands the role of the SEN Governor and supports the SEN Governor in carrying out that role.

The Governing Body will need to:

- Establish the responsibilities that the SEN Governor should undertake and provide support for the role
- Take an informed interest in special educational needs issues
- Monitor, evaluate and review the Special Educational Needs policy on a regular basis
- Ensure that the other school policies fully support the principle of inclusion for all pupils
- Provide an opportunity for any outgoing SEN Governor to pass on information

## **Human Resources Management**

**The staffing of the school is its most precious resource and the large majority of the schools financial resources are expended on ensuring the proper remuneration and management of the schools human resources. All governors, but especially those who sit as members of the personnel sub-committee will play an important role in the HR management of the school.**

It is important that governors (and again especially those who sit on the personnel sub- committee) have a general understanding of the key employment policies, procedures and practices, and that they stand ready to support and/ or challenge the Headteacher in applying them in the day to day management of the staff of the school.

The role of governors in the delivery of secure and appropriate human resources management will vary somewhat between schools across the Trust because the Trust has inherited the majority of its staff on transfer arrangements from their former LA employers, and results in some variance between levels of involvement of governors. However in general the role of governors (mainly though not exclusively delivered by the personnel sub- committee governors) will be:-

- To hold the Head to account for having in place robust performance management arrangements for teaching and support staff.
- To determine the appropriateness of recommendations from the Headteacher for Performance Related Pay (PRP) increases and that they are based on a fair and transparent assessment procedure which accords with the school and Trust Pay Policy. This will include hearing of appeals brought by members of staff against the judgements of the Headteacher.
- To ensure that an appropriate staffing structure is in place for the school and to hold the Headteacher to account for the allocation of the school's financial resources for staffing so that it best delivers the teaching learning and support functions of the school. Where staffing restructures need to take place the governors involved in the reduction/redundancy process will hold the Headteacher to account for the proper and fair conduct of the redundancy processes.
- One member of the Personnel sub-committee ( in all likelihood the Chair of the sub-committee) will be expected to work with the Chief adviser of the Trust in the performance assessment of the Headteacher once the school has been a member of the Trust for at least one year.
- To ensure that the Headteacher provides the committee with appropriate reporting on the equal opportunities characteristics of recruitment to and make-up of the school and determines appropriate strategies to improve representation.
- To take part in recruitment and selection processes for some categories of staff at the school when determined, in liaison with the Headteacher.

Importantly governors ( normally and mainly governors who are members of the personnel sub-committee) will also ensure that processes and procedures relating to the conduct, attendance, discipline and capability of staff at the school are properly and fairly carried out and are in line with the HR Policies of the school and the Trust. This important role will largely be carried out by personnel sub-committee governors but where there are a needs for both first hearing and appeal stages of a process it may be necessary for other governors to become members of hearing panels. Such responsibilities and activities will relate to:-

**Capability** – To hear appeals against first or final warnings and to hear cases or appeals against Headteacher decisions where dismissal of a member of staff is involved.

**Disciplinary** – To hear cases and/or appeals about matters of staff conduct, including dismissal for gross misconduct where this is relevant.

**Flexibility** – To hear appeals against decisions by the Headteacher on requests for flexible working and job sharing arrangements

**Grievance** – To hear grievances of some categories of staff (especially senior staff where it may not be appropriate for these to be heard by school employees due to seniority issues) where it is not policy for this to be undertaken by the Headteacher. To hear appeals against outcomes/sanctions where the decision of the Headteacher is challenged

**Absence/Attendance** – To hear cases/appeals (depending on the levels of delegation present in the schools policies) concerning warnings or dismissals.

In addition the nominated group of governors will also:-

- Agree the provisions for counselling and well-being services to be provided and funded by the school
- Put in place classroom observation and monitoring protocols for the management of teacher appraisal and receive review and challenge the Headteachers assumptions concerning the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- Hear and determine complaints against the staff or the school where the complainant is not satisfied with the Headteachers response. Such complaints will be considered by a panel of three persons, two of which will be governors of the school.

As a specific role the Chair of Governors (or his/her nominee) will:-

- Approve absence requests and arrangements for the Headteacher
- Undertake ( or delegate to another named governor) responsibilities for the performance management and appraisal of the Headteacher alongside the Chief Adviser of the Trust
- Deal with grievance or disciplinary matters relating to the Headteacher
-

## **Safeguarding**

**The Children's Act 2004 places a duty on agencies to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard for the need to safeguard children and promote their welfare.**

By safeguarding and promoting welfare we mean:

- Protecting children from abuse or neglect
- Preventing impairment of the child's health or development
- Ensuring children's are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life changes in adulthood

It is recommended that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor should not be a parent governor or teacher governor as this could lead to them being compromised in the event of a disciplinary matter.

The safeguarding governor will:

- Need to be familiar with guidance and policy relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection and associated issues, and to attend training for nominated Safeguarding and Child Protection governors
- Be responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body puts in place a suitable Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and associated procedures and be a champion for safeguarding and child protection issues within the school
- Encourage other members of the governing body to develop their understanding of the governing body's responsibilities with regard to Child Protection and assist them to perform their functions in respect of Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Contribute to ensuring any deficiencies in the school's safeguarding practices are addressed which may be brought to Governors' attention by a member of school staff, a parent, an officer of the Authority or from any other source
- Meet regularly with a senior member of the school's team who is the designated teacher for safeguarding and child protection in order to monitor the effectiveness of the governing body's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. It is recommended that this is at least a termly meeting

***The safeguarding governor will also ensure that the governing body receives an annual report on the implementation of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and that report includes how the school has ensured the following is in place:***

- Arrangements for ensuring that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy is communicated to, and implemented by, all staff:
- that the school has a designated member of staff with lead responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection who is a senior member of school staff and has sufficient time and resources at his /her disposal to carry out his / her duties effectively the school has identified a deputy designated teacher for safeguarding and child protection
- the school has ensured that the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection and his/her deputy receive training every two years
- the school has training in Child Protection in place such that training is undertaken by ALL staff, including Lunch Time Supervisors, clerical staff and other ancillary staff, every three years
- the school has arrangements in place for the inclusion of child protection procedures in an induction programme for all people working in the school, no matter for how long, nor the status of that individual
- that the school has arrangements to ensure safer recruitment and employment procedures and undertakes and records appropriate checks on all staff and volunteers such that they are cleared to work with unrestricted access to children.
- The number of students currently subject to a Child Protection Plan **(NB details of names will not be provided to maintain confidentiality)**
- How Safeguarding and Child Protection issues are addressed through the curriculum
- The provision of information to the LA about how the governing body's duties in respect of Safeguarding and Child Protection have been discharged

In addition the governing body must ensure that the requirements of the Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation and guidance on Safer Recruitment and Employment practices in schools are carried out properly. This will include ensuring that at least one member of every interview panel convened for the recruitment of staff ( teaching and support) has received Safer Recruitment training delivered by an approved training provider.

## **Pupil Premium**

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to have a link governor for the use of the pupil premium, given the importance given to raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, governing bodies may well wish to consider such a role. In determining how that role is carried out the following may be useful when determining who on the governing body could carry out that role:

### **The Importance of knowing your school**

- Obtain information and data on and become familiar with the school's use of the pupil
- Know basic pupil premium facts for the school, such as how many pupils attract the premium, how this figure compares with other local and similar schools, and how the money is spent
- Meet termly with the staff responsible for performance data to discuss issues around under-performing groups, including those eligible for the pupil premium
- Challenge the allocation of the pupil premium grant if there is no clear audit trail evidencing appropriate use of the resources

### **Monitoring data**

- Understand relevant school pupil performance data that shows progress of different groups over time
- Ensure the school is monitoring and reporting on spending of the pupil premium, ensuring the money is spent in identifiable ways to support target groups of pupils
- Ensure the school is monitoring and reporting on the attainment of different groups of pupils over time to provide evidence of how pupil premium pupils are progressing compared with others

### **Governing body meetings**

- Take an active part in any governing body or committee discussions when the allocation and monitoring of the pupil premium is discussed and decided
- Report back to the governing body on the school's use of the pupil premium

## **Attendance**

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to have a link governor for attendance, given the importance of attendance for learning in raising aspirations and standards of achievement, governing bodies may well wish to consider such a role. In determining how that role is carried out the following may be useful when determining who on the governing body could carry out that role:

- An awareness of the school's attendance policy and Ofsted expectations
- A strategic understanding of the connection between attendance, teaching and learning, behaviour for learning, parent/carer pupil engagement and achieving high standards for all pupils
- An ability to interpret attendance data and challenge the headteacher and senior leaders to secure improvements through a range of interventions, as appropriate
- Check the school is regularly monitoring attendance, reviewing progress and taking action
- Meet termly with the school attendance lead to scrutinise plans on improving attendance including rewards for good attendance, escalation processes for those who struggle with attendance, links with external support agencies where additional challenge is required
- Make sure that parent/carer issues are addressed in liaison with the family liaison/support worker team
- Track the profiling of the importance of attendance in classrooms, around the school, on the school website, in communications with parents/carers
- Report to governors on the outcomes of discussions, identifying areas of concern as well as highlighting examples of effective practice

## **Health and Safety**

The role of the governor with a lead role in monitoring health and safety in school is important both in terms of supporting school leaders and the Trust but also in ensuring the governing body is supported in its role to monitor health and safety at the school.

The Trust supports the following Health and Safety Executive advice on the role as being:

- To take reasonable steps to make sure that the school is following the Trust's policy and procedures e.g. through regular discussion at governance meetings.
- Ensure that school leaders have supported staff through the receipt of adequate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.
- To help promote a sensible approach to health and safety, making use of competent health and safety advice when required.
- To report back to the governing body and its committee on how well the school is meeting its obligations and to ensure areas for improvement are highlighted and acted upon (paying particular attention to reports from the Trust's health and safety system)
- In overall terms the governor with the link role should work in close partnership with the head teacher and senior management team to support sensible health and safety management and to challenge as appropriate.

## **Committees**

The Active Learning Trust asks that each school establish two committees to support the Local Governing Body – these are:

- The Finance and Property Committee
- The Personnel Committee

Detailed Terms of Reference for each committee are available to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs), but the main duties can be defined as:-

1. Assisting the decision making of the LGB, by enabling more detailed consideration to be given to the best means of fulfilling the LGB's responsibility to ensure sound management of the school's finances and human resources, including proper planning, monitoring and probity.
2. Making appropriate comments and recommendations on the management of the school's resources (including finance, premises, staffing) to the LGB on a regular basis.

*It should be noted that committees do not have delegated powers and major issues will be referred to the full LGB for ratification.*

Each committee consists of a minimum of four governors including the Headteacher. Associate members (such as the lead finance officer in the case of the Finance and Property Committee) are recommended.

Each committee meeting will require three governors present to be quorate.

## **Statutory Committees**

Schools are required to have a group of governors that are able to support the school when committees are needed for the following:-

- Staff Disciplinary Hearings
- Pupil Exclusions Hearings
- Complaint Hearings

The Active Learning Trust recommends that all governors agree to be members of Statutory Committees, giving the person convening a hearing (usually The Clerk to Governors) flexibility should an occasion arise.

# The Active Learning Trust

## National Governors Association

As a member of a Local Governing Body of The Active Learning Trust, you will automatically become a member of the National Governors Association – an organisation that gives guidance and advice for school governors.

Please let Karen Jarvis know the email address you would like to register with by emailing [Karen.jarvis@activelearningtrust.org](mailto:Karen.jarvis@activelearningtrust.org) so that your membership can be activated. This will enable you to access the 'members only' area of NGA website.

Once your membership has been activated by ALT, follow the instructions below to view the site:-

Go to <http://www.nga.org.uk> and click the 'Log In' button at the top of the page. Once on the Login page, please click on the forgotten password link and then enter your email address. The password will be sent to your email. Once you have the password please enter your email address and then the password you were given to log on. You can change the password at your convenience.