learning
academy
partnership

Governance Structure

This document sets out the growth of the Governance Structure
of the Learning Academy Partnership (a School Trust)

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FLOURISHING FUTURES

The Learning Academy Partnership (South West) is a family of aspirational schools, working together within a School Trust. The School Trust has a Church of England Foundation and is a fully inclusive School Trust, welcoming both church schools and community schools, each retaining its own distinctiveness. The School Trust is an accredited academy sponsor and as such can welcome schools in all Ofsted categories.

Mission

Flourishing Futures (John 10:10 He came so that they may have life and live it to the full).

Vision

We will be an exceptional School Trust. We are committed to social mobility and a culture of belonging. We do this by investing in people enabling every child to be taught by the very best teachers so that we can achieve social change and all children flourish.

Values

Empower: We invest in each other and our communities.

Excel: We champion opportunity and equality for all and in all that we do.

Together: We are one team and we agree to work as one family.

Our Beliefs

We believe:

We are Stronger Together: we deliver and achieve more than we could ever do individually.

In a Sense of Belonging: every member of our School Trust matters and knows that they belong.

In Removing Barriers: ensuring that where you begin does not limit your horizons.

In Realising the Possible: you cannot be what you cannot see.

Collaboration with Accountability and Impact

As a Trust of schools, we seize every opportunity to engage in deep collaboration, between and within schools, in order to secure the very best educational experience and outcomes for our children.

Our schools work together within an aligned model of interdependence, partnership, and co-construction. By working as a collective of schools, putting the needs of every single child in the Trust first, we can bring about sustainable, excellent provision and a culture of innovation and improvement. Quite simply, we ensure that we harness every opportunity to improve the education for our children because we are a School Trust.

Our model is one of: shared responsibility and accountability; targeted and effective school to school support; challenge and mutual trust. We work through a clearly defined school improvement strategy and Business Support model, including shared expertise and system leadership. We empower one another to excel and be greater than the sum of our individual parts. Together we achieve much more than we could ever do individually.

We passionately believe that every child should have an entitlement to be taught by excellent teachers in excellent schools with leaders that will always put children first. We are passionate about promoting, sharing, and developing expertise, leading to excellent practice across all our schools. Our values are simply **'Empower, Excel, Together'**.

As well as our deep collaboration as a Trust of schools we also work in the wider system, locally and regionally. As a National English Hub, we have the privilege of supporting schools beyond the Trust on their journey. This brings a rich experience to both the school, Trust and staff involved in the support.

This moral imperative permeates all levels of our organisations and governance, at all levels ensures that our children and communities are served to the very best of our abilities. Our model includes effective governance at both Trust and local level. Alongside the strategic governance of the Board, a local model is essential in ensuring that we meet the distinctive needs of the local communities which we serve. This is how we will ensure that our children flourish.

Tracey Cleverly
Trust Lead

Governance

Members

The Founding Members of the Learning Academy Partnership, School Trust, are the subscribers to the Trust's Memorandum of Association and set the mission of the Trust. They have an overview of the Trust's business so that they can be assured that the Board is exercising effective governance.

The School Trust comprises Members (simple majority foundation). The minimum number of Members shall not be less than three. The Members are accountable to the DfE and have ultimate responsibility for the School Trust achieving its charitable objectives. They sign off the Articles of Association and have the power to appoint and remove the Trustees.

The current members of the Trust are:

- EDEN; acting corporately by hand of its representative Archdeacon Douglas Dettmer - Foundation
- Askel Veur: acting corporately by hand of its representative – Lee Moscato - Foundation
- Mr Paul Cornish - Non-Foundation
- Mr Gavin Booth – Foundation
- Mr Richard Vaughton – Non-Foundation

Members and their representatives are asked to declare any relevant business and pecuniary interests when they are appointed and are invited to declare any relevant interest at the start of each meeting so any conflict can be managed appropriately.

Members remain independent of the Trust Board.

Members will meet at least on two occasions in the academic year. The Chair of Trustees will normally attend the meetings and the Members will receive minutes from the Trustee Meetings.

See the Trust website lapsw.co.uk for further information.

Board of Trustees

Currently the composition of the Board is as follows: the Trust Lead (CEO), six foundation Trustees, four non-foundation Trustees of which three are co-opted. However, there is no maximum number of Trustees as long as the Board has a simple majority of Foundation Trustees. All Trustees appointed to the Board, do not represent individual schools but champion the best interests for all across the Learning Academy Partnership Trust.

Trustees are appointed as follows:

Foundation Trustees: appointed by Exeter Diocesan Network of Education (EDEN)
Co-opted Trustees: appointed by the Trustees

There shall not be less than 5 including the Chief Executive. Parents are represented at the Ethos & Advisory Committees (EACs).

Type of Director	Name	Skill Set	Term of Office
Chair (Foundation)	Joanne Tisdall	Business Management	4 years
Foundation	Mark Graves	Business consultant, Academy Ambassador	4 years
Non-Foundation	Philip Dean	Finance Director (Chartered Accountant), Academy Ambassador	4 years
Foundation	Maria Goodwin	Education	4 years
Foundation	Ann Palmer	Education, EDI, AI	4 years
Foundation	Helen Pennack	HR	4 years
Non-Foundation	Lucia Glynn	Estates, Sustainability	4 years
Foundation	Olga Nasiridou	Education, Safeguarding	4 years
Non-Foundation	Helen Burge	Finance, Sustainability	4 years
Non-Foundation	Lee Mulligan	Business, Governance, Risk & Compliance	4 years
Non-Foundation	Andrew Bedforth	Diplomatic, Commercial and Business	4 years

Overall accountability in our School Trust rests with our Board of Trustees. Governance within the School Trust consists of the Trust Board, at a strategic level, and Ethos & Advisory Committees (previously known as governors) supporting and challenging at a school level.

Collectively Board Trustees deliver the core functions common to school governance. Board Trustees must also ensure compliance with company and charity law and with the Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State. Our governance structures ensure we have distinction between the individuals who are Members and those who are the Board of Trustees, this enables Members who are independent of the Board Trustees to provide challenge and scrutiny to the Board.

Board Trustees have three strategic core functions:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance.

The high-level skills-based Board Trustees meet at least five times a year: an additional Strategy and Development day forms part of the structure.

Composition of Trustees

Board Trustees are appointed for their wide-ranging knowledge skills and/or experience in the following areas:

- Corporate and Business Strategy / Development
- Accountancy Compliance and Business Growth
- Human Resources
- Legal
- Educational
- Estates
- Foundation Trustees (majority) which will include an Incumbent
- Chief Executive Officer (Trust performance and development, Education and standards, Business development)
- Other skill set as required

Co-opted Trustees

Board Trustees may appoint co-opted Board Trustees with the required skill set as is necessary to support its development from time to time. Co-opted means a person who is appointed to be a Trustee by being co-opted by Trustees who have not themselves been so appointed.

Terms of Office

The term of office for Trustees shall be four years, as long as they remain eligible. Trustees' terms of office are reviewed annually.

Trustees are appointed because of the breadth of experience, skills, and expertise they can bring to help to realise the Trust's vision and values and enhance the effective strategic leadership of the School Trust. Subject to remaining eligible, a Trustee may be re-appointed or re-elected.

The Chair will not normally stand for more than 4 years.

Committees

The Board operates committees with delegated powers: These committees meet as needed and are accountable to the Board of Trustees.

Audit Risk and Resources Committee

The School Trust has a combined finance, audit and risk committee. Employees of the School Trust cannot act as members when audit matters are discussed. However, they can remain 'in attendance'.

The Accounting Officer and/or Chief Finance Officer should attend to provide information. The Chair of Trustees should not be the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

The role of the committee includes:

- Directing the School Trust's programme of internal scrutiny to provide assurance to the Board.
- Reporting to the Board the adequacy of the School Trust's financial and other controls on risk management procedures and ensuring that risks are being addressed appropriately through internal scrutiny.
- Reporting to the Board on financial scrutiny and oversight and on the adequacy of the School Trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and management of risks.
- Reporting to the Board on all significant financial matters including decisions taken under delegated powers, and action taken to contain expenditure within the budget.
- Oversight to ensure information submitted to the DfE and ESFA that affects funding, including pupil numbers returns and funding claims (for both revenue and capital grants) completed by the School Trust and constituent academies, is accurate and in compliance with funding criteria.
- Oversight of external audit arrangements to ensure quality of reporting and appropriateness of management response.
- Reporting to the Board on HR and the recruitment strategy of the Trust.
- To establish and approve remuneration, HR and related policies in order to ensure that sound procedure is in place meeting all statutory requirements.
- To act on behalf of the Board, in line with the Scheme of Delegation, in appointments disciplinary cases, dismissals, and grievances.

Education & Standards Committee

The Education & Standards committee exercises the powers and duties of the Trust Board in respect of education and standards of the Trust, except for those items specifically reserved for the Board of Trustees and those delegated to the Trust Lead (CEO), CFO and other staff.

The committee coordinates the Board's educational and standards responsibilities by recommending policy and strategy to the Board. In addition, they monitor the educational outcomes for all children, including the most vulnerable to measure the impact of the school improvement offer and hold executive leaders to account. The committee assists the Board in exercising its duties, provides the Board with an overview of the Trust's educational position.

Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee will discharge the functions conferred on it by relevant Education Acts and Regulations

Rapid Improvement Board

The Rapid Improvement Board (RIB) is established for schools who have recently joined the School Trust and either needs rapid improvement or a high level of involvement from the Learning Academy Partnership's educational and business teams. This is usually as a result of an Ofsted category (Inadequate, Requires Improvement or notice of a returning Section 5) or where a governing body has been removed by the Local Authority.

This interim board is established to provide stability and continuity during the transitional period and to work to ensure that all standards, Trust policies and requirements are met or achieved. The TMB provides the additional scrutiny required to ensure rapid improvement in the provision for the children in a way that meets the distinctive needs of the community.

The RIB will graduate to an Ethos & Advisory Committee.

Chairs' Forum

The role of the Chairs' Forum is to act as a forum for feeding back and feeding forward between the Trust Board and the Ethos & Advisory Committees (EACs).

The forum focuses on educational risks and creates support and challenge between Board and EAC. The Board monitors the impact of the EAC as well as taking advice and feedback to ensure children receive a high quality education offer and that the distinctiveness of each community is met through the offer to schools and children.

Ethos and Advisory Committees

The Ethos & Advisory Committees (EACs) are organised to best meet local needs. Where appropriate, there may be one EAC for one school, however it is more likely that a joint EAC will 'govern' a number of schools, depending on local circumstances. Typically, in the case of primary schools, this will be within regional hubs with 3 or 4 schools operating under the guidance of an overarching EAC. A secondary school may be more likely to have its own committee.

The EAC is an advisory committee of the Trust Board and accountable to the Trust Board. The Committee contributes to the strategic direction and vision realisation of the School Trust, working together: **Empower, Excel, Together**. The Trust Board delegates responsibilities to the EAC as is relevant and appropriate to meet their particular expertise and collective needs.

The main role of the EAC is to be able to express and act on local views and issues – views of parents and the community, etc. One of the key purposes of the EAC is to ensure that the academies are being a good expression of what and who the School Trust is in the local community. Therefore, these roles are about ensuring that the School Trust ethos is "lived" out in the school on a day-to-day basis.

The EAC will: support, inform, advise and challenge provision; working together, empowering excellence and improving outcomes for all children. Working with the Head Teacher, Executive Team and Trust Board, the EAC is a local voice and a link with local communities and churches (Church Schools) as well as being advocates for all School Trust schools.

As ambassadors for the schools, the EAC can play a crucial role in enriching community relationships and communication, contributing to the collective effectiveness of schools and the Board of Trustees.

Parents represent the School Trust at the EAC.

The roles translate specifically into the following tasks that the EAC undertakes:

- To offer challenge, support, and advice on the overarching question 'How is the academy a good articulation of the Trust mission in the local community?' through asking 4 key questions:
    - What is the experience for pupils?
    - What is the experience for parents?
    - What is the experience for staff?
    - How is the ethos/Christian Distinctiveness upheld in the academies?
- To carry out three learning walks a year.
- To attend three meetings per year.
- To engage with the bespoke training programme offered.
- To complete the suite of safeguarding training requirements.
- To attend and participate in academy events as a visible and positive presence.
- To report and communicate with the Board of Trustees through the Chairs Forum.
- For nominated committee members to attend SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) and Ofsted inspections and talk knowledgeably about the strengths and challenges in the academy.
- To review and contribute to the academy/academies risk register.
- That elected committee members will hold portfolios for ***Inclusion*** or ***Ethos and Christian Distinctiveness***
- That elected Admissions Panel members will determine all admission rounds and in year admission applications through the Local Admissions Panel
- That committee members will form Exclusions, Appeals, and Complaints panels as required.
- To preserve and support the Trust Foundation and the Christian Distinctiveness of Church School academies, including RE (Religious Education) and ethos of community academies.

The membership of a church school or mixed Ethos & Advisory Committee Hub is as follows:

- The Head Teachers within the Hub
- A minimum of two foundation members
- A minimum of two parent representatives
- Other members will be appointed with the appropriate required skill base.

The membership of a community school Ethos & Advisory Committee Hub (no church schools) is as follows:

- The Head Teachers within the Hub
- A minimum of two parent representatives
- Other members will be appointed with the appropriate required skill base.

Other Committees

- Appeals

- Rapid Improvement Board**:** This committee may be set up when a school is working in partnership with the School Trust or considering joining the School Trust. The Board will agree to delegate as much to the Rapid Improvement Board as is necessary to meet their specific needs and to support the work of the Board. The Chief Executive will advise the Board to provide effective support.

- Transition Ethos and Advisory Committee: When a new school joins the Trust the Trust Board may deem that a Transition Ethos and Advisory Committee (TEAC) is implemented to support the transition of the governance and the school into the Trust. This decision will be based on several factors including category of the school, stability of governance and other factors within the Hub the school will be joining.

- The TEAC will mirror the membership requirements and align to the Scheme of Delegation, Terms of Reference and quality assurance cycle. The Chair of the TEAC will attend the Chairs' Forum with the Board and be an active participant, ensuring the reciprocal feedback processes are adhered to as set out in the Terms of Reference. The TEAC may be supported by members of the Executive Team, Senior Leadership team or another EAC member to support the transition.

The TEAC will be in place for no longer than 1 year where the transition into the Hub EAC will take place. The Trust Board can decide to disband the TEAC at any point during the year.

Administration

The Diocese will communicate to the Board (all category of Trustees) details of training and other information.

The Trust will be responsible for Governance training (Members, Board Trustees and Ethos & Advisory Committees), support and advice.

The Governance Professional will be appointed by the Trustees. The Governance Professional will lead on Trust Governance, but minute taking may be delegated to members of the Business Support team as required. The Governance Professional will not be a Trustee, Headteacher or Chief Executive.

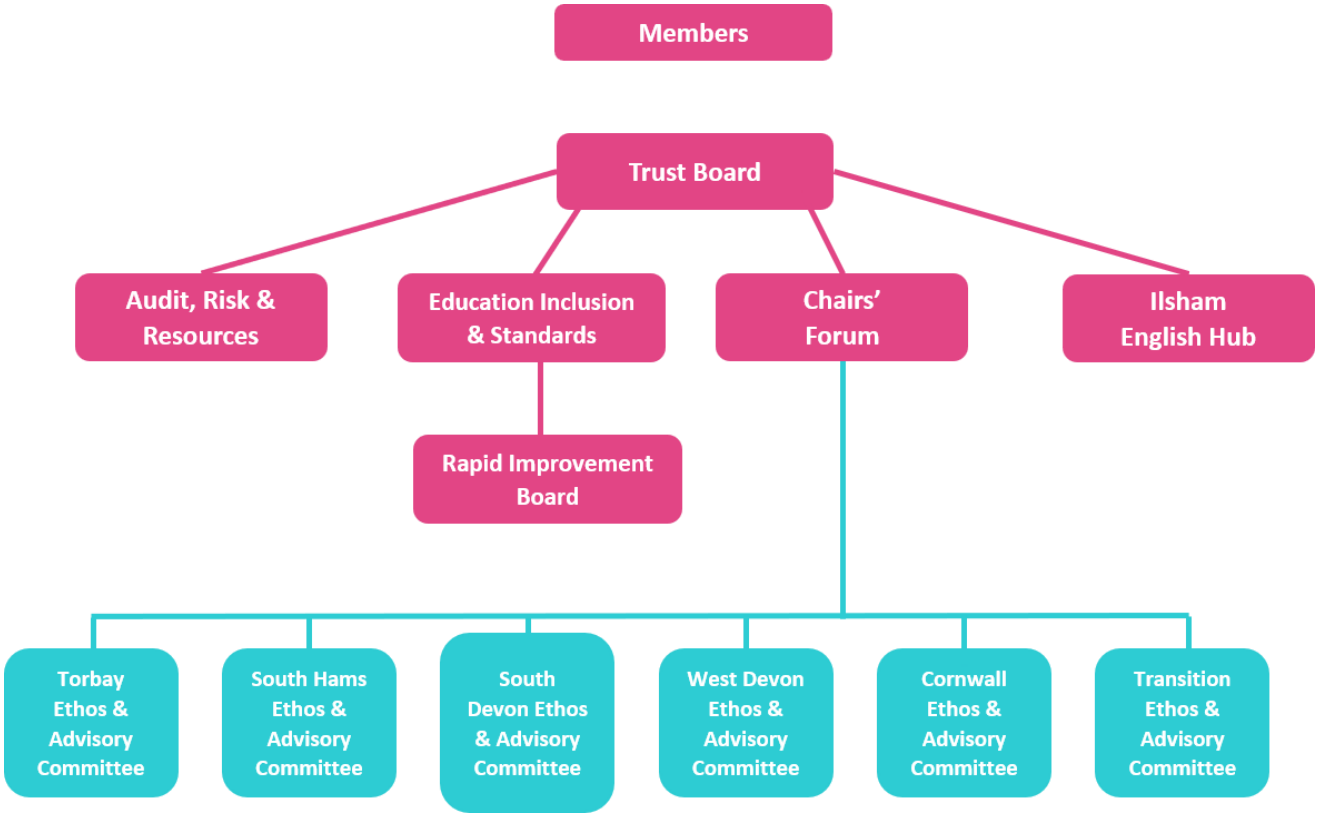
The Governance Coordinator will be appointed to administer governance arrangements for the local Hubs.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board will be appointed or re-appointed each new academic year, at the first meeting from among their number. The Trust Lead will not be eligible to be the Chair or Vice-Chair.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees will also be appointed or re-appointed each new academic year. Members of staff and parent representatives are not eligible to stand.

The Scheme of Delegation is available on the Trust website Scheme of Delegation

Governance Structure



How do we Quality Assure our work?

On an annual cycle the Board complete 1:1 skill audits alongside a 360 review of the Chair.

The Board reviews and evaluates the governance functions against the governance assurance framework on an annual basis.

Every 3 years the Board commissions an External Review of Governance to assess compliance and impact of governance on the children, families, and communities we serve.

Ongoing quality assurance is provided by external and internal audits.

Revisions

January 2025	Updated Trustee list
July 2025	Updated Trustee list
September 2025	Updated Members list
July 2026	Updated Members list
July 2026	Updated Trustee list
July 2026	Removed senior leadership from EAC Hub make up
September 2026	Updated Members list