



Lionheart Academies Trust

Governance

1. The Trust vision and ethos

Lionheart Academies Trust is committed to providing high quality, comprehensive, non-secular, inclusive education for young people in Leicester and Leicestershire. The Trust has two clear aims: **Academic Excellence and Holistic Development for all**. We believe that any young person from any background deserves an equal chance to be successful in whatever they choose to do. We want to share our love of learning with these young people in order to open the doors to their futures and prepare them with the knowledge and confidence to thrive in a competitive world.

Our Mission

Our educational mission is simple: ANY young person from ANY background deserves an EQUAL chance to be successful in whatever they choose to do.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is clear. We promote a student- centred approach that is underpinned by the understanding that the highest quality education is a right that all young people deserve regardless of their starting points. We are dedicated to providing young people with the strongest foundations; educational qualifications that they can feel proud about because their education has taught them how to feel proud. We know that promoting a positive, proactive approach that celebrates success unites school communities and breaks down barriers to learning. Students under our care will be taught how to learn in this way. We will encourage students at every level of ability to aspire to develop personally and academically and we will use the '4Rs' as cornerstones of outstanding learning. The '4Rs' encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, help them to grow in confidence and prepare them for life outside of education. They are:

- **Resilience** – The ability to bounce back when the going gets tough.
- **Reciprocity** – Learning to work together and show care and understanding for each other.
- **Resourcefulness** – Having the confidence to ask for help and to find answers in new ways.
- **Reflectiveness** – Considering what needs to be done to make the next steps.

Our Pledge

Our pledge is a promise to the communities that we serve that we will work with them with limitless enthusiasm and optimism providing a platform for each young person's light to shine brightly. To fulfil our pledge we will use the 5Ps they are:

- **Pupil Centred** – Schools are run for pupils and everything we do is for our pupils.
- **Positivity** – We all embrace challenges and look for opportunities.
- **Passionate** – We value nothing more than equity and quality learning for all pupils.
- **Professional** – We model professionalism at all times.
- **Practice** – Teachers and other staff will be highly qualified. Subject teachers will be passionate specialists; quality first teaching is at our core.

2. The Governance Structure

The governance of schools within Lionheart Academies Trust operates at three levels:

Members of the Trust

Members ensure that the Trust adheres to the Articles of Association and the Lionheart Academies Trust Pledge. They appoint some of the Trustees and can remove Trustees in exceptional circumstances.

The Board

The Board carries final responsibility for the Trust. The Board is made up of ten trustees who are at one and the same time charity trustees and company directors. The key functions of governance lie first and foremost with the Board: ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding the Executive Principal / CEO to account for the educational performance of the schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff; holding the Operations Director to account for the financial and operational performance of the schools and making sure that money is well spent, with a core priority of teaching and learning. This meets every half term.

Local Governing Body

The Trust is committed to ensuring that, whilst academies across the Trust have a shared vision and ethos, this is applied in each individual academy in line with the particular local context of the academy and the community within which it sits. A key role of the local governing body is bringing an understanding of context to governance work, along with a commitment to ensuring the very best outcomes for children and young people in their own academy. Belonging to the Trust means that, at times, decisions will be made collectively by the family of academies and the Trust Board which benefit the family as a whole but which may not have been the first choice of an individual local governing body. Belonging to a Trust means that at times each school will need to make some compromises for the sake of the group.

The local governing body is made up of staff, parents and community members and holds delegated responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning with the aim of ensuring the highest standards; recommending and monitoring the local budget; ensuring effective performance management is in place; recommending the strategic vision of the local school and monitoring strategic action plans.

Governors, including parent governors, are appointed based on skills.

Local governing bodies meet every half term in line with the data snapshots collated by each academy across the Trust.

All governance work is covered within the whole governing body meetings. Trust academies do not have separate committees for curriculum, finance etc. to ensure that all governors are fully engaged with all areas of academy life. There is the flexibility to arrange short-term working parties when particular oversight is needed, such as a new build.

Individual governors take on specific areas of responsibility and are entrusted by the local governing body with ensuring that they understand their area in greater depth through visits to the academy, additional reading, training, etc.

Delegated responsibilities

Final responsibility for all the academies within the Trust lies with the Trust Board, who delegated some responsibilities to local governing bodies.

In some exceptional circumstances these responsibilities may need to be withdrawn for a time from an individual academy for reasons such as concern about financial mismanagement, an ineffective working relationship with the Head of School, decisions which negatively impact on progress and attainment or the pupil experience, safeguarding concerns.

Where it is felt that this is necessary, the Chair of the Trust and the CEO will work with the Chair of Governors to ensure that they are informed and that delegated responsibilities are re-applied as soon as possible.

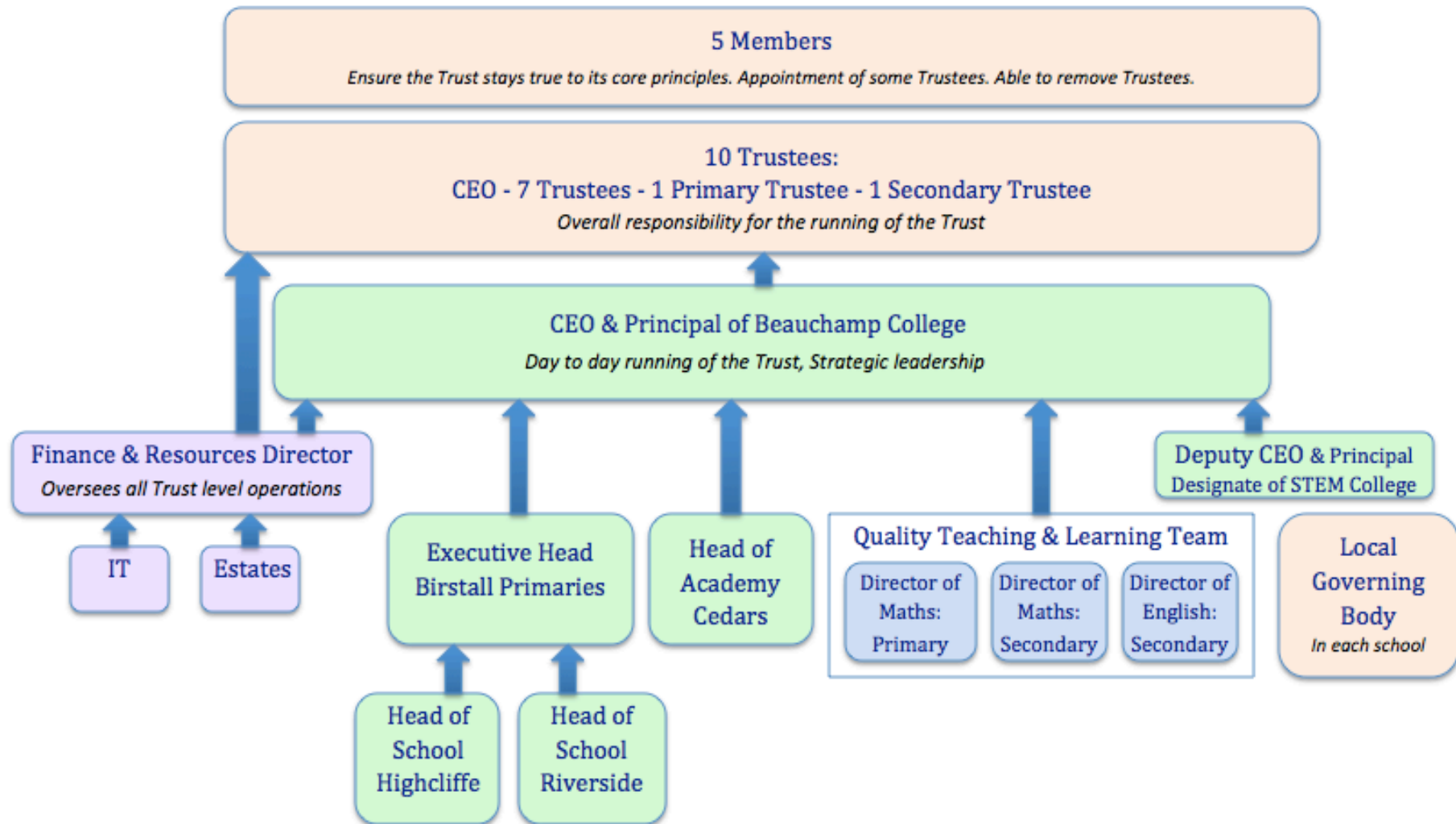
Trust Leadership Team

Senior Leaders within the Trust, including the CEO, Heads of School, Directors of Learning and Operations Team, meet weekly to work collectively to raise standards across the group. This team make strategic recommendations to the Trust Board and act as a senior leadership team for the family of schools.

Operations Team

The Trust has an operations team which supports the family of schools in ensuring financial efficiency, shared IT structures and support, HR, estates management, catering, etc. They are able to attend local governing body meetings as appropriate to support significant strategic decision making.

The Trust Governance Structure



3. Strategic remit of the Board and Local Governing Bodies (see Scheme of Delegation for more detail)

	Strategy	Finance & Compliance	Quality Teaching & Learning	Frequency
Lionheart Executive Board	<p>Trust Development Plan (TDP) drives whole Trust strategy</p> <p>Raising standards of progress & achievement on all levels in all schools</p> <p>Staffing: appointment of Operations posts and Heads of School /Principals / Executive Heads; strategies to develop a world class workforce</p> <p>Building Learning Power: strategies to develop the highest possible quality of teaching & learning</p> <p>Trust growth through sponsorship/new schools, ensuring sufficient capacity and balance to maximise benefits for all</p> <p>Holding to account</p> <p>Directly: Executive Principal and Operations Director</p>	<p>Budget: Agree budgets for all schools</p> <p>Budget monitoring report: review minutes of Board Finance Committee</p> <p>Core charge for MAT services: agree annually</p> <p>MAT services provided: agree annually</p> <p>Alerts and concerns: KPIs and reports from Operations Team alert the Board to non-compliance, financial risks, etc. and actions taken to prevent further instances. Board decides to withdraw autonomy and responsibility where necessary.</p> <p>Annual Financial Report: agree</p> <p>Audit Report: receive – monitor via Board Finance Committee</p> <p>Auditors: agree internal & external auditors</p> <p>Value for money: ensure</p> <p>Compliance: health & safety – ensure school health and safety systems are effective and compliant.</p>	<p>Trust Development Plan (TDP) drives whole Trust strategy.</p> <p>Targets: agree</p> <p>School Development & Local Development Plans: agree, following recommendation by Executive Principal</p> <p>School improvement: drive forward school improvement and raising standards through monitoring via KPIs and reports from Operations Team and Executive Principal.</p> <p>School improvement: where necessary, decision to insist that school improvement partners are appointed to a school to ensure raised standards, or school to school support is arranged. School budget provision must be made in response by the school.</p> <p>Curriculum: Curriculum decisions impacting several schools across the Trust / several local groups</p> <p>Staffing: ensure high quality staff remunerated at an appropriate level are in place – ensure effective performance management across the Trust.</p> <p>Barriers to learning safeguarding: ensure systems are in place in each school and across the Trust to ensure pupils are safe, safeguarding is in place and barriers to learning are removed.</p>	Half termly
Executive Board Finance Committee		<p>Budget setting: review budgets for all schools & recommend to Board</p> <p>Budget monitoring: KPIs from Operations Team highlight concerns – agree actions to mitigate, withdrawing financial autonomy if necessary</p> <p>Contracts: agree & review</p> <p>Insurance: agree & review</p> <p>Cashflow: monitor</p> <p>Changes to assets: agree</p> <p>Mid year changes to budgets: agree</p> <p>Audit action plan: review</p>		Monthly

		Gifts from Trust: agree, within policy Risks: consider and agree mitigations; monitor Special payments (staff severance, compensation, ex gratia): agree (take larger sums to the Board) Tender process: agree Leases by the Trust: recommend to Board Leases from the Trust: agree Core charge: monitoring Trust-wide finance policies: agree Financial regulations: agree & review Benchmarking: receive benchmarking reports		
Executive Board Remuneration Committee			Performance management and pay: Carry out performance management of the Executive Principal and Operations Director. Agrees the pay of the Executive Principal and Operations Director and reports to the Board. Receive recommendations and agrees pay awards for Heads of School, Principals, Executive Heads and members of the Operations Team.	Autumn

Local Governing Body (LGB) - each academy

Local Governing Body (LGB)	School Development Plan (SDP) drives an individual school's strategy Vision and ethos: agree for local context Staffing structure: agree, following advice from Head of School & HR Exec Premises long term plan: agree, following advice from Head of School & Exec Estates IT: agree developments, following advice from Chief Information Officer Risk Management: identify risks; agree mitigations; monitor impact. Report risks to Exec Team. Stakeholder voice: monitor & respond	Budget: align to SDP, agree & recommend to Board Lettings: agree lettings variations for local context Value for money: ensure	Core work: Holding the academy to account for quality learning & teaching for all pupils, including vulnerable groups. Barriers to learning & safeguarding: reduce barriers; ensure targeted funding is spent appropriately; ensure effective safeguarding is in place Performance management & Pay: ensure high quality teaching and learning through effective performance management. A Pay Committee reviews targets for the coming year and receives recommended pay awards to consider and agree (Head of School / Executive Head / Principal pay awards are agreed by the Board Pay Committee not the school Pay Committee).	Half termly
	Holding to account			
	Directly: Head of School / Principal / Executive Headteacher			

4. The Local Governing Body

Each Local Governing Body within the Trust works from the same core agenda to ensure that all areas of responsibility delegated to the local governing body by the Trust Board are included in meetings.

Sources of information

It is expected that governors will triangulate a range of evidence in order to effectively hold the academy to account:

- **Internal information** – provided by the academy
- **External information** – provided by the Trust leadership, Ofsted, the local authority, external advisors, RAISEonline, external data dashboards, etc.
- **First hand knowledge** – gathered through learning walks and visits to ensure that what is being shared by senior leaders is reflected in first hand experience of the academy

Key documents

- **School Improvement Plan – school tasks & impact** - updated each time by the Head
- **School Improvement Plan – governor tasks** – updated in advance by the Chair (who checks for updates with relevant governors before sending to the Clerk)
- **Data dashboard**
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**
- **Budget monitoring papers**
- **Budget**
- **3-5 year School Development Plan**
- **External reviews**
- **First hand reports** – learning walks etc. by governors

Agendas

Draft agendas are sent to the Chair of Governors 2-3 weeks prior to a meeting for adapting to suit the local context. A generic agenda is supplemented by items specific to each term, and additional items are included based on national or regional issues and changes.

Clerking

Effective clerking is vital to ensure that the local governing body is effective and efficient. All academies require a professional clerking service from a trained clerk. The Trust has a very experienced clerk who offers support and guidance to clerks within the family. We aim to have a consistent approach across the group of academies to ensure that senior Trust leaders and Directors can easily access the information they need in order to carry out their overall responsibilities.

Role of the Chair of Governors

The Chair has a key role within the structure of the Trust, taking a lead with the local governing body and ensuring that all delegated responsibilities are effectively managed in order that students make the best possible progress and attainment.

For this reason, the appointment of a Chair is recommended by the local governing body but then has to be agreed by the Trust Board before taking on, or continuing in, the role.

The Chair is also the direct link between the local governing body and the Trust Board through the Chair of the Board. It is expected that any concerns, significant challenges or changes, emerging risks, etc. will be shared immediately with the Chair of the Trust. After each meeting it is requested that the Chair sends a completed feedback form to the Chair of the Trust (pro forma provided).

The appointment of Primary and Secondary Trustees

The Trust Board includes one post for a Primary Trustee and one for a Secondary Trustee. These trustees bring an understanding of how decisions being made at Board level might impact on schools within their phase, but as Trustees they are expected to act within the interests of all schools in the Trust. When a position becomes vacant it is advertised to all governors within the relevant phase with an invitation for expressions of interest. The Board consider all expressions of interest fully and appoints a Trustee on the basis of skills for a period of 2 years.

Transparency and visibility

Local governing bodies have a duty to ensure that those who are stakeholders in the academy are aware of who they are and the role they perform. This will be available on the website, but each local governing body should ensure that they engage with students, parents, staff and the wider community in a way which is appropriate to their particular context.

The Trust Board will circulate a summary of issues discussed at Board meetings to staff and governors, ensuring that any sensitive issues are kept confidential.

It is recommended that the Chair updates parents in a similar way about issues discussed at the LGB through their own academy's newsletter.

Key governor documents

All governors have access to a set of core documents on Governorhub including:

- Articles of Association for the Trust
- The Lionheart Pledge
- The Academies Financial Handbook
- The Ofsted Inspection Framework
- The Governance Handbook
- The Lionheart Scheme of Delegation
- The Lionheart Terms of Reference
- Shared policies including Safeguarding

Appointment and induction

Governor appointment within the Trust is on a skills basis. Nationally there is a pattern of a high proportion of governors leaving the role within the first year, which has an inevitable impact on the chair and clerk who will have invested time and energy in their induction process.

It is therefore vital that all potential governors meet with the chair at the point at which they are expressing an interest in the role so that the chair can outline the demands and responsibilities of governance and share a job description.

It is also very important that all governors genuinely add value and do not cause unnecessary friction through misunderstanding the role or using poor communication or interpersonal skills. Governing bodies should be careful to ensure that all the governors they appoint will make a valuable and positive contribution, and it is better to be blunt at the outset than to risk having to ask that a governor steps down once issues emerge.

Once appointed, the Chair of Governors and clerk to the local governing body are responsible for the induction of new governors to ensure that they are up to speed on current issues and able to work effectively as quickly as possible. It is recommended that all new governors are linked to a mentor within the governing body, and meet with the chair and clerk in advance of their first meeting for a tour of the school and to complete key paperwork (see below).

All new governors are expected to undergo induction training with Governor Development Service within the first 6 months of appointment.

The clerk should provide each new governor with the following, either electronically or as paper copies:

- New governor form (Clerk send the completed form to the Chair and GDS)
- Details of how to arrange a DBS (possibly to coincide with initial induction visit)
- Code of Conduct
- Lionheart Pledge
- Dates of meetings
- List of members of the governing body and email addresses/responsibilities
- GDS training brochure
- Ofsted School Inspection Framework
- Governance Handbook
- Latest Improvement Plan
- Minutes of last meeting (and Budget where appropriate)
- NGA Job Description (if not already sent)
- Glossary of terms
- Ofsted Report
- Details of how to access the Governorhub where documents are stored online
- Any passwords e.g. eis, The Key
- Link to school website
- Academy Finance Handbook
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

The clerk is responsible for informing Governor Development Service that a new governor has been appointed.

Governorhub

All academies within the Trust have access to Governorhub, an online resource where all documents relating to the LGB are stored. Each governor has an individual page on the site which includes their training record, responsibilities etc.

Contact details

The Chair of the Trust, Chris Swan, can be contacted on chairofgovernors@lionhearttrust.org.uk 07572631005.

Example agenda

AGENDA XXX ACADEMY AGENDA – SPRING 1

Date & time (2 hours)

Room



No.	Item	Timing	Time	Lead	Papers
A.	OPENING BUSINESS				
1	Welcome/Apologies	5		Chair	
2	Matters for AOB			Chair	
3	Declarations of Interest			Chair	
4	Clerk's business			Clerk	
5	Minutes of last meeting - accuracy			Chair	Minutes

B	Quality Learning & Teaching <i>Have we done what we said we would do? Has it had an impact? What needs to change?</i>	Timing	Time	Lead	Papers
6	Data dashboard	15		Head	Data dashboard
7	KPIs KPI alerts from Trust Operations Team & senior leaders in the academy	10		Head	KPIs
8	School Improvement Plan – school responsibilities	15		Head	Updated School Improvement Plan
9	School Improvement Plan – governor responsibilities	5		Chair	Updated Governor Plan
10	School Improvement consultant reports, Exec Principal reports etc. <i>External validation</i>	5		Head	Reports where appropriate
11	Barriers to learning – reports where appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Premium • Safeguarding • Children in Care • Young carers • Vulnerable groups • Wellbeing concerns and strategies 	5		Senior Leadership Team	Reports

12	Governor first hand evidence Visits, learning walks	5		Governors	Visit reports
C	Strategic discussions				
13	<i>e.g. curriculum changes, staffing structure changes, new builds etc.</i>	15		Chair & Head	
D	Stakeholders – new information				
13	Parents & PTA Pupils Community & Lettings	5		Chair / Parent or Pupil links	Questionnaire responses etc.
E	Operations				
14	Budget monitoring	10		Head / Business Manager	Budget monitoring document
15	Health & Safety & Premises	5		Business Manager / H&S Governor	
16	IT / website	5		Business Manager / Website Governor	
F	GOVERNANCE				
17	LGB Membership Training	5		Chair	
G	CLOSING BUSINESS				
18	Risk Register updates	5		Chair (to be updated on the register by Business Manager)	
19	Update on actions from last time			Chair	

Staff and governors contact the Clerk in advance to highlight whether these are Red Amber or Green

5. Matters Arising / Action Updates for the next meeting				
Item No	Item	Responsibility	Deadline	Update RAG

20	Verbal update on events, celebrations etc. in school. AOB & date of next meeting	5		Head Chair	
----	---	---	--	-------------------	--

Meetings – additional tasks

Half termly meetings	
Summer 2	Budget – agree Governance – agree roles and responsibilities; Code of Conduct; Pledge; Declarations of Interest forms completed; elect Chair & Vice Chair bi-annually Data – primaries review data already in Plan Pay Committee meeting date All local policies for review this year LA Safeguarding Return
Autumn 1 Early September	Key focus meeting - School Improvement Plan and end of year data review ONLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEF including analysis of data from last academic year • School Improvement Plan agreed • Governor learning walks linked to SIP priorities agreed • Pupil Premium impact review from previous academic year • Pupil Premium spending for this academic year agreed • (Primary) Sports funding impact review from previous year • (Primary) Sports funding spending for this academic year agreed • (Secondary) Year 7 Catch Up Funding impact review for previous year • (Secondary) Year 7 Catch Up Funding spending for this academic year • Governing Body SEF (if not completed in a separate meeting)
Autumn 2	Safeguarding governor visit report Pay Committee feedback
Autumn 3	Pupil Premium learning walk report Website audit report back (website governor)
Spring 1	Audit action plan By Feb - Agree Admissions Policy Agree uniform supplier for the coming year Staff, Pupils and Parent Questionnaire analysis report and planning necessary changes based on results (Secondary) agree curriculum changes
Spring 2	SEND governor visit report
Summer 1	County Safeguarding return

5. Individual governor key roles and responsibilities

	Name	Role
Chair		Attend Chairs' briefing termly. Regular meetings with Head of School/Principal (approx. every 2-3 weeks) Safeguarding (in addition to Safeguarding governor, and taking on the same responsibilities as listed) Children in Care, unless delegated to joint Safeguarding Governor Prepare agendas, ask staff for paperwork, lead the admin of the GB along with Clerk. Leadership of GB Allegations Management training where possible.
Vice Chair		Work with Chair to lead GB.
Finance		Join monthly meeting of Head of School, Business Manager and CEO to monitor and review spending
Health, Safety & Premises		(Secondary) Attends school Health, Safety & Premises meetings (secondary) (Primary) Meets with Business Manager/Premises Officer to review health and safety within the academy. Receives H&S audit reports and ensure GB is updated on audit action plan. Kept informed about premises developments.
Safeguarding		Safeguarding visit Safeguarding training as applicable, including Safer Recruitment where appropriate
Pupil Premium		Keep an eye on Pupil Premium – ensure it is covered in every meeting. Pupil Premium Training.
SEND		Attend SEND briefing from local authority. Carry out learning walk Feb using pro forma. Meet with SENCo termly ahead of 2 nd GB meeting of the term to receive update.
British Values		Keeps aware of British values and Prevent information and ensures this stays on the agenda for the school.
Pay Committee		Performance Management – receive recommendations for pay awards; review targets; agree pay for SLT; receive anonymised summary of targets met. Attend pay & performance management training. Feb – receive summary of mid term reviews.
Website		Liaise with Business Manager re. website oversight – is it compliant with statutory demands
Parents		Attends parent events where possible. Ensure the IGB engages with parents in a way which is appropriate to the context of the school. Reviews follow up actions to parents' questionnaire.
Anti Bullying & esafety		Attend esafety sessions for parents Read up on anti-bullying best practice & safety/cyberbullying Attend training where possible
Exclusions		Attend training Be available where possible to sit on panels, should they arise
Data		2 weeks before govs mtg meets with lead for teaching & learning to review data and agree paperwork for meeting Receive Ofsted data dashboard and raise concerns with senior leader responsible for data is appropriate prior to meeting where this will be discussed. Meet with senior leader responsible for data to discuss RAISEonline when it is

		published (Secondary) Meet with senior leader responsible for data to discuss ALPS when it is published.
Training & development		Encourage governors to attend training. Clerk collates the training record – remind govs to tell clerk when they attend training/ note on Governorhub Attend LA Training and Development Governor briefings.
Pupil Voice		Attend School/Student Council meetings and feed back ideas and concerns (Secondary) Support and mentor student governors.