Marches Academy Trust

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Governors Handbook

www.marchesacademytrust.co.uk

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to act as both a reference point for existing Governors, and as an induction into effective governance for new Governors.

The Handbook contains information on the following:

- Your role within the school and on the Local Governing Body (LGB);
- Information on the structure of the Marches Academy Trust;
- Procedures and protocols that you must be aware of;
- Signposts to further information;
- A glossary of terms and acronyms often used in meetings; and
- Information on the training which is available to Governors.

The website for your school contains a great deal of information which you may also like to refer to:

- Contact details for members of staff;
- Maps of the site;
- Up and coming events; and
- Links to the most recent Ofsted Reports.

2 Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

"It is a great pleasure to be involved with the Marches Academy Trust as a Trustee, and having originally joined Sir John Talbot's school as a new Governor myself, I know how useful this Handbook is in understanding what's expected of Governors and how the Trust operates.

On behalf of the Trust, I would like to express my appreciation for the commitment that you are making by taking on the role of Governor. The contribution that you will make in applying your own particular combination of skills, knowledge and experience is critical to the success of the school. You should feel confident to demonstrate your support, challenge where and when you feel it is necessary, and play your part in the school's development. You will also have the opportunity to work with other Governors across the Trust to continually improve the level of governance we provide.



I hope you will find this Handbook of real value, and we always welcome suggestions for ways it could be improved to help new governors joining the Trust."

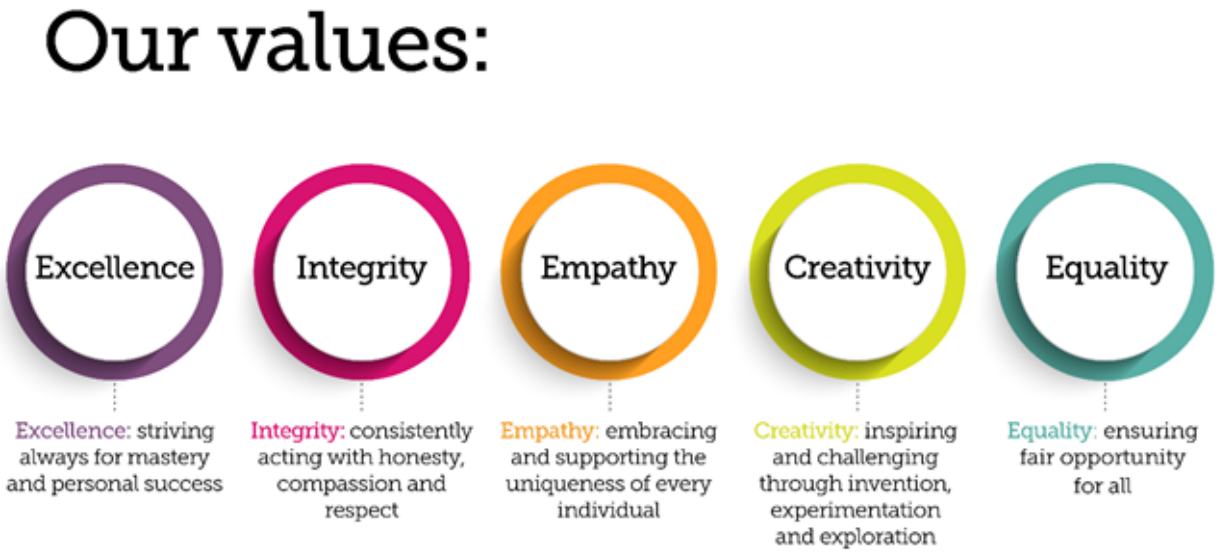
Alex Fry
Chair of Board of Trustees

3 Marches Academy Trust Vision and Values

Our Vision – 'Achievement through caring'

The Marches Academy Trust is a vibrant learning community, comprising of a very supportive parent body, caring and forward-looking staff, energetic and thoughtful students, a proactive governing body and an ever-developing cross section of community partners. Children are placed firmly at the centre of all we do: we pride ourselves on offering a wealth of opportunities, allowing all in the learning community to experience success in many different ways, and at a variety of levels. Our challenge therefore is to constantly seek out new ways to innovate from within the classroom and outside it, as we believe firmly in the need to keep moving forward, so that our young people have the best possible experiences and life opportunities.

Our core values:



Excellence – striving always for mastery and personal success
Integrity – consistently acting with honesty, compassion and respect
Empathy – embracing and supporting the uniqueness of every individual
Creativity – inspiring and challenging through invention, experimentation and exploration
Equality – ensuring fair opportunity for all

The Marches Academy Trust Learning Mission Statement

We believe: Successful creative lifelong learners participate in a journey of self-discovery. They know how to learn, acquire skills and feel safe to take risks with confidence and courage.

4 Governance Structure and Lines of Accountability

The Marches Academy Trust (MAT) is governed by the Board of Trustees, who are accountable to the Department for Education, and have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of the schools operated by the Trust.

Schools currently in the Trust:

- Grange Primary School
- Grove School and Sixth Form
- Longlands Primary School
- Lower Heath CE Primary School
- Marches School
- Oakmeadow CE Primary School
- Shrewsbury Academy
- Sir John Talbot's School
- Tilstock CE Primary School

The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee (not for profit) and is required by law to operate to all statutory regulations and rules within its Articles of Association which are registered at Companies House. The Trust has a three-tier management system. The Members of the Trust are similar to the 'shareholders' in a company and are responsible for strategic oversight, whilst the Trustees are appointed to challenge and scrutinise the strategic direction and day-to-day running of the company.

The Board of Trustees of the Marches Academy Trust delegates responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy to the lead professional of the MAT, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Board of Trustees Committees, including the Local Governing Bodies, also deliver elements of the Trust vision and strategy as outlined in their respective terms of reference. The Board of Trustees hold the CEO to account for the performance of the Trust, including the performance of the schools within the Trust. This means that as the CEO is accountable to the Board for the performance of the Trust as a whole. The CEO will report to the Board on the performance of the Trust, including on the performance of the Trust's schools.

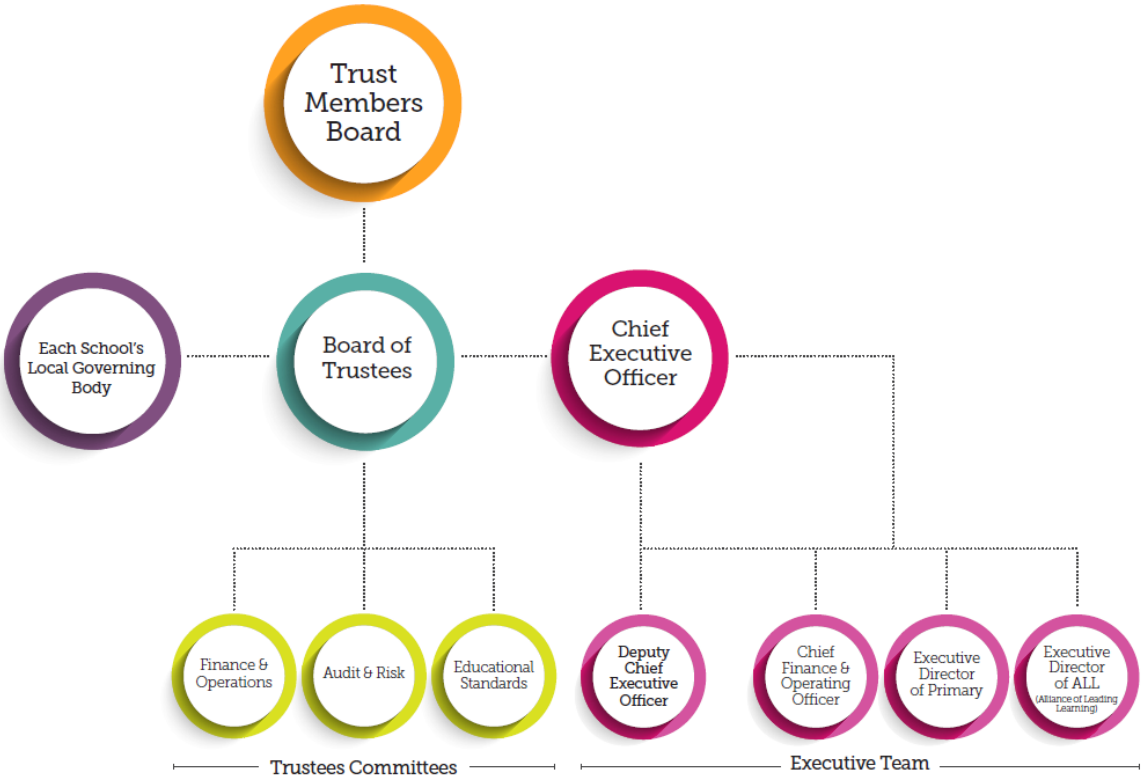
The CEO is performance managed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The CEO performance manages the Executive Leaders (Deputy CEO, Executive Director of Primary, Chief Finance Officer and Executive Director of ALL). The Deputy CEO and Executive Director of Primary line manage individual school Headteachers*.

In order to assist with the discharge of their responsibilities, the Trust has established a Scheme of Delegation, Governance and Executive structures and statements of Vision and Values. The Boards of Trustees have also established a Local Governing Body (LGB) for each of the schools. The LGB shall be a committee established pursuant to Articles 100 to 104 (inclusive) of the Articles of Association of the Trust.

At school level your LGB, who understands how the school is led and managed, acts as the eyes and ears of the school and its community and has a role in influencing decision making. Your Board have a direct communication link to the Trust Board via their Chair and the CEO, in case concerns need to be raised, and to ensure understanding and commonality of purpose.

Each LGB is also invited to send a representative to the Trust's Educational Standards and Finance & Operations committee meetings. These representatives will participate in the meetings but only the Trustees will have voting rights where formal decisions are required.

*Headteacher is used to describe the person who holds the most senior position in the school.



5 The Role of Governors and the Local Governing Board

Good governance is at the heart of delivering educational excellence and a clearly defined structure, where all parties understand their roles and responsibilities, is essential to providing the best education for our pupils. The purpose of governance is to provide confident and strong strategic leadership which leads to robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Trust encourages open governance, and LGBs should be practising this at all times.

The Board of Trustees has established a LGB in each school. The Trustees appoint the Chair and approve Community Governors. A minimum of two parents will also be elected to the body.

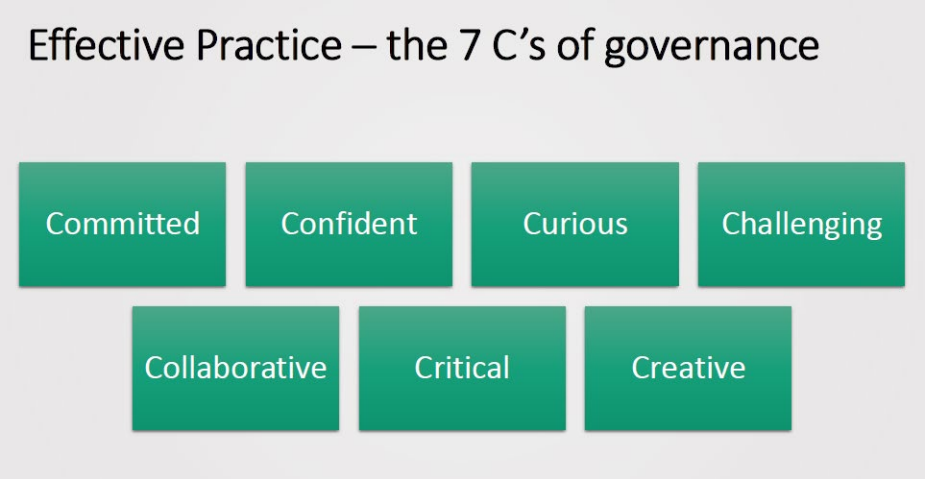
The model composition of a LGB:

Type of Member	Number	Term of office	Election method
Community Governor	Max of 4	4 year	Appointed by the Board of Trustees.
School Headteacher	1	Indefinite	Ex officio appointment
Parent Governors	2	4 year	Parent election – Secret ballot organised by the Clerk
Staff Governor	1	4 year	Staff election – Secret ballot organised by the Clerk
Foundation Trustee Governor	1*	4 year	In church schools, the Diocese appoints its own Governors. *This must be at a ratio of 25% of its total members.

Summary of Function/Responsibilities:

1. Ensuring and championing clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff;
3. Ensuring value for money is being achieved from school budgets. (This does not include formal financial accountability which is delegated to the CFOO); and
4. Assist in overseeing the Health and Safety of all students, staff and visitors; and ensuring safeguarding for all students.

The LGB will also evaluate, monitor and seek to improve the quality and impact of governance.



Effective governance is never passive, and the Trust expects its Governors to:

- Engage with the Trust and attend LGB meetings;
- Stay strategic and avoid unnecessary detail and peripheral issues;
- Ask questions & challenge;
- Understand safeguarding;
- Set and safeguard high expectations of and for the LGB, pupils, staff and parents;
- Get to know other people on your LGB board & across the Trust; and
- Be informed - keep yourself up to date and undertake CPD & training.

6 The Relationship between the Academy Trust, the Local Governing Body & the Committees

6.1 The LGB will have delegated power to monitor the role of the school on an operational day to day basis, and review:

- the management and organisation of the school;
- the implementation of the decisions of the Board and the CEO;
- performance in relation to targets and standards approved by the Board; and
- the implementation of policies approved by the Board.

6.2 The LGB will report to the Board on decisions and will also provide advice and make recommendations to the Board on issues.

6.3 It may be necessary, from time to time, to establish a committee of the LGB, in order to deal with an issue that cannot be dealt with adequately by the LGB in one of its scheduled meetings e.g. a committee to deal with admissions, salaries, complaints or a pupil Exclusion. Any such working party will be disbanded as soon as its work is complete.

6.4 The Board of Trustees may, if required, disband the LGB at any time and take over its function for governance.

6.5 The Board of Trustees can amend the levels of delegation of the LGB, if required, at any time.

7 The Constitution of the Local Governing Body

7.1 The constitution of the LGB will be defined by the Board of Trustees, and will be reviewed annually.

7.2 Membership of the LGB will be determined by the Board of Trustees, and the filling of vacancies for parent and staff vacancies is to be approved by the Trustees. The Trustees have an approved election process, and any vacancies will be filled through requests for nominations, and elections where there is more than one nomination.

7.3 The term of office for members of the LGB will be four years. A Governor will be removed from office by the Board of Trustees if they are absent, without the permission of the LGB, from three consecutive meetings, unless there are deemed to be extenuating circumstances.

7.4 Each Governor shall act in the best interests of the school at all times, and Trustees may terminate or suspend the appointment of any Governor whose presence or conduct is deemed by the Trustees not to be in the best interest of the Trust or the school. Governors will be required to read and sign the Code of Conduct every year. They must operate within this Code of Conduct and adhere to the Nolan principles of public life.

7.5 Part of the role of any Governor within the Trust will be to make visits into school; these should be carried out following the Trust's Governor Visits Protocol which is outlined later in this document.

8 Appointment and Removal of Governors to the Local Governing Body

The Trust encourages Governors from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and perspectives, that better reflect the communities they serve.

Position	Appointed By
Chair of LGB	Trustees
Staff Governor	By election by staff within each school
Parent Governor	By election by parents within each school
Community Governor	Trustees
Headteacher	Trustees
Foundation Trustee Governor	In church schools, the Diocese appoints its own Governors. This must be at a ratio of 25% of it's total members.

Governors are appointed for a period of 4 years and may be removed by resignation, or by Trustees, if their presence or conduct is deemed by the Board of Trustees, at their sole discretion, not to be in the best interest of the Trust or the individual school. Governors are required to sign a Register of Business Interests and Code of Conduct every year.

The Board of Trustees may choose to bring in people to sit on LGBs who provide links to the local community, in addition to parents.

9 The Meetings

9.1 Meeting Protocol

Meetings of the LGB should be purposeful, effective, and make efficient use of the time that volunteer Governors generously give to support the school.

The LGB should meet at least once every half term and **should last no more than about 2 hours**. Along with the standard items for each meeting there should be:

- updates on pupil achievement, including attendance and exclusions;
- reports from the Special Educational Needs and Disability, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Pupil Premium Link Governors (these are always a focus for Ofsted);
- report from the Chair on any actions taken in the interim period;
- the Headteacher's reports - this will generally be the main agenda item and should embrace the key issues that Governors will need to assess the progress of the school (see below);
- Any Other Business (AOB) - except in extreme circumstances, AOB items should be submitted to the Chair in good time before the meeting to allow the issue to be itemised for Governors to consider before the meeting: it is at the Chair's discretion whether AOB items are accepted.

The agenda and supporting papers should be prepared and circulated in advance to give time for Governors to read them before the meeting. It is good practice for Governors to receive the papers at least seven days prior to the meeting and, except in extreme circumstances, papers should not be tabled at the LGB meeting. **There is an expectation that the papers will be read beforehand in order to conduct the meeting effectively.**

On the assumption that pre-reading has taken place, the Chair should take questions and points of clarification on each of the papers presented but the papers should not be re-read line by line in the meeting. Please note:

9.1.2 The meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and with any other regulations, amendments, or directions as may be issued from time to time.

9.1.3 The Vice Chair of the LGB will be elected by all those members of the LGB present at the first meeting of the LGB in the Autumn Term every year.

9.1.4 The meetings of the LGB will be quorate if three or one-third of the membership are present (whichever is greater).

9.1.5 The Clerking to the committees will be fulfilled by the Clerk to the LGB.

9.1.6 Governors will be required to declare any personal or financial conflict of interest arising from a matter before the governors or from any other aspect of governorship and should not use their position as governor to benefit him/herself or other individuals or agencies.

9.1.7 Minutes shall be kept of each meeting, and shall be presented to the next meeting of the LGB, for approval and signing. The minutes shall be kept in a separate minutes folder, with confidential minutes and reports on yellow paper. A copy of the impact statements shall be submitted to meetings of the Board of Trustees, to include any recommendations made by the LGB and the minutes will also be made available.

9.1.8 Governors have the right to request any matters discussed at meetings to be recorded in the minutes, subject to confidentiality.

9.1.9 Governors should be aware of the procedures established by the governing body for responding to criticism or complaint relating to the school. Please see the Trust's complaints policy.

9.1.10 Each LGB is authorised to invite attendance at its meetings from persons to assist or advise on a particular matter, or range of issues, including parents and members of the school staff who are not Governors.

9.1.11 Only Governors may vote at the LGB meetings. Where necessary, the elected Chair of the Committee may have a second or casting vote. Governors may not vote by proxy. Any Governor may participate in a meeting by telephone or video conference, provided that they have given reasonable notice to the Clerk, and that the Governors have access to the appropriate equipment.

9.1.12 In the event of a need to make genuinely urgent decisions between meetings, on matters falling within the remit of the committee, the Chair of the LGB, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, will take appropriate action on behalf of the LGB. The decisions taken and the reasons for urgency will be explained fully at the next LGB meeting.

9.2 Notice of Meetings

9.2.1 The LGB shall generally meet in accordance with the annual meeting schedule agreed at the start of each year; additional meetings will be called as and when necessary, at the request of the Chair, or at the request, in writing, by any three Governors.

9.2.2 Meetings of the Committees will be called by the Clerk, and seven days' notice will be given with an explanation of the purpose of the meeting.

10 Confidentiality

Governors must observe complete confidentiality in all matters discussed at governing body meetings especially in relation to matters concerning staff or pupils and also any other matters agreed by the governing body.

Governors should never speak out against decisions, in public or in private, outside the governing body. Failure to comply can lead to disciplinary action.

The governing body as a whole decides if an item for discussion is confidential and all governors are expected to abide by that decision. Governors are expected to respect that confidentiality

and not disclose information deemed as confidential in any other forum. All discussion in reaching decisions should remain confidential to those present at the meeting.

The Committee may need to meet in confidential mode, where the subject for consideration is the pay or performance review of any person employed to work at the School. In such cases any relevant person employed to work at the School, other than the Headteacher, should withdraw, unless specifically invited to stay by the Committee to contribute to the consideration of the matter.

All reports to the governing body and its committees are public documents after the meeting has considered them and must be available at the school to anyone wishing to view them unless the governing body specifically decides they are confidential.

You are asked to leave any hard copies of confidential reports or minutes with the Clerk at the end of a meeting so that they can be securely destroyed.

GDPR, Freedom of Information and Information Security
It is the responsibility of the Governors to ensure procedures are in place to ensure that the school complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 which is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Trust has both a Data Protection Policy and a Freedom of Information Policy, which are publicly displayed on the school's websites**.**

If you want to know more about the Data Protection Act please click HERE

Freedom of Information Act 2000
The Freedom of Information Act was passed to open up public bodies to greater scrutiny by the public. It has two key requirements:

- To require public organisations, such as schools, to have a publication scheme where they proactively publish details of budgets, policies and other key items of information – such as minutes of the LGB.
- To give members of the public the right to request copies of any information or document held by the school.

One key issue you need to be aware of is 'Confidential minutes' – these are not always confidential. Although such minutes are confidential at the moment of creation, such confidentiality can diminish over time. Although personal information would normally remain confidential (unless subject to a SAR request) until a person's death, detailed information about contract terms and decisions would become available to the public on completion of the contract.

For more information about the Freedom of Information Act please click HERE

Information Security
Some of the work you do as a Governor may involve holding personal and confidential information. You must treat the security of this information as a top priority.

All papers from meetings should be either handed back at the end of the meeting, or returned to school for confidential shredding.

At home

- **You must use your official mmat.org.uk email address to send and receive any emails. Please do not use your personal email address.**
- Keep any files associated with your duties secure; use a password protected area of the hard drive or password protect each file individually. Ideally hard drives should be encrypted.
- Do not keep a back-up of all your work on a memory stick.
- Securely delete all files.
- Do not leave paper files or meeting notes containing personal or confidential information on lying around, they should be locked away when not in use.

When moving information between locations

- Keep paper records/files and your laptop secure at all times, they are your responsibility.
- If leaving paper records or your laptop in a car, they need to be kept in a locked boot. If this is impossible, they should be hidden away as much as possible and the car kept locked (do not leave your car unlocked whilst unloading!). Keep the paper records separate from your laptop – thieves will often take the laptop and leave the files, minimising the amount of information lost.
- If the content of an email is personal or confidential, never disclose this in the subject line of the email.
- If you must use a memory stick or disc to move data, please make sure all files are individually password protected. Encrypted, password protected memory sticks are available if you hold highly sensitive information.
- Never post a disc or memory stick containing personal or confidential information; however, couriers or recorded delivery can be used if this is acceptable to the recipient (using an encrypted stick). Ideally, they should be hand delivered to the intended recipient to ensure information security.
- Never carry a disc or memory stick 'naked' in your pocket, put them in a sealed envelope with your contact details on the front (they have a habit of slipping out of pockets and getting lost).
- Only forward emails containing personal information on a 'need to know' basis: take special care to check the contents of long email responses.

11 Governors Conduct

The LGB is a corporate entity and acts as a group. No one category of Governor has any right to act individually, except when the LGB has given delegated authority to do so (or when the Chair [or Vice-Chair] has to take urgent action).

The strength of a governing body lies in the talents and commitment of its members, and in their ability to work together as a team for the good of the school. Every Governor has an equal right to participate and to state his or her own views. No Governor has the right to expect preferential treatment because of his or her status on this or any other body or group.

Each Governor has a responsibility to make up his/her own mind about issues that are considered by the LGB. Once decisions are made by the LGB (or under the delegated authority of the LGB), individual Governors are bound by them and are expected to support and abide by them.

Governors have a responsibility to act fairly and without prejudice at all times, and in so far as they have responsibilities for staff, will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer. Concerns about the School or individual members of staff will be dealt with through the Headteacher and not aired publicly.

Governors are expected to:

- Read any papers circulated before the meeting.
- Attend meetings and arrive on time.
- Send apologies to the Clerk before the meeting if you cannot attend.
- Contribute to the discussions where relevant.
- Avoid anecdotal distractions.
- After debate, accept the majority view of the LGB.
- Respect the confidentiality of issues raised.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times.

The Governors Code of Conduct (Section 8.1) lays out the full expectations of Governors. All Governors within the Trust must sign the Code of Conduct every year and must adhere to it at all times.

12 Local Governing Body Terms of Reference

The following is a summary of the areas of responsibility. The full terms of reference are provided to the Governors at the first LGB meeting in the new academic year.

- Seek to understand and question how the school is led and managed, acting as a critical friend: the school Headteacher will report on how the school is fulfilling the Trust's ethos, vision and strategy.
- Act as the panel when reviewing the school Headteacher's decisions on exclusions, and other committees as required.
- Be the consultative body for the school's stakeholders.
- Represent the school's stakeholders.
- Forge links with the community and provide a vehicle for Trust board engagement with the school, its parents and local community, to help ensure that the Academy Trustees stay connected.
- Act as an ambassador for the school.
- Monitor and challenge, reporting on concerns from the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the Trustees Educational Standards Committee.
- Bring issues and risks to the attention of the Trust Board.
- Provide constructive feedback to the Board where a policy may not be effective in the local context, and suggest alternative approaches.
- Help ensure the Trust works as one entity, in the interests of all its schools equally.
- Deal with any other matters which the Board of Trustees may refer from time to time.
- Report to the Board of Trustees annually on members contribution and the impact of the LGB.
- Ensure value for money is being achieved from school budgets. (This does not include formal financial accountability which is delegated to the CFOO).
- Provide a consultative forum for the school for the implementation of new policies and procedures.

- For church schools, to monitor and support the Christian distinctiveness and church ethos of the school.
- Make recommendations to the Trust board on pay progression for teaching staff.
- Act as the panel for salaries, complaints and pupil and staff disciplinary/dismissal committees.

Please also refer to the Scheme of Delegation which clearly sets out each layer of governance and determines who has the power to take which decision within the Trust.

13 The Different Roles on the Governing Body

13.1 The Relationship between Governors and the Headteacher

Support and Challenge
The Governors' role is to both challenge and support the leadership of the school, to ensure that the agreed vision for the school is delivered. Governors need to be aware of the progress the school is making through regular reviews and discussion. This needs to be supported by regular, rigorous data. It also needs to be set into the context of each cohort, and of cohorts over time. Governors need to be aware of the challenges which the Leadership is facing, and of the measures being taken to meet these challenges.

Support
The Governors need to publicly support the actions agreed at LGB meetings, even when these will prove difficult and unpopular. The Chair of Governors and the LGB have a role to play in staffing decisions that may result in reorganisation and redundancy. They have a role in the performance management of the Headteacher but also in supporting the leadership of the school in delivering effective performance management for all members of staff. The Headteacher needs the support of the LGB to ensure high quality teaching and learning throughout the school, and must be able to rely on this when the going gets tough.

Challenge
The new Ofsted framework has firmly linked effective governance with effective leadership of the school. Both need to be good to achieve a good grade from an Ofsted inspection (please see section 7 below).

13.2 Positions within the LGB

The Chair will be appointed by the Trust annually, and the Vice Chair is appointed by the members of the LGB. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will lead the meetings of the LGB and take 'Chair's action' if necessary. At a meeting where neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair is present, the LGB will elect a Chair from those present for the duration of that meeting.

13.3 Role of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors

The Chair of the LGB is responsible for the efficient running of Governors' meetings. The Chair will liaise with the Clerk to the LGB, to ensure that agendas and associated papers are prepared in good time, and circulated before the meeting. This should, as a minimum, be 7 days. It will be the expectation that Governors will have read the papers before the meeting, to contribute to the effective and efficient governance of the school. Ideally, no meeting of the LGB should

exceed two hours, and it is the Chair's role to ensure proper discussion and participation within this timescale.

The Chair will be expected to meet regularly with the Headteacher and establish a professional working relationship with the Headteacher, and the Senior Leadership Team of the school.

The Vice Chair of the LGB will substitute for the Chair in his/her absence and should follow the guidance set out above. Where the absence of the Chair is known in good time, it would be good practice for the Chair and Vice Chair to liaise in some detail to ensure that the Vice Chair is properly prepared for the meeting

13.4 Role of the Clerk to the Local Governing Body

This is a crucial role for the smooth running of the LGB. Not only should the Clerk prepare agendas and circulate papers under the guidance of the Chair of Governors; they are also responsible for the efficient preparation of minutes of the meetings and their circulation. The Clerk will need to maintain a Register of Interests of Governors and update this every year. They must also keep careful details of attendance, absence and apologies to enable the Chair to monitor the commitment of each Governor.

The Clerk will be expected to be familiar with this 'Governance Handbook', the Trust's 'Articles of Association', and the LGB Terms of Reference, and to prepare and provide advice to the Chair and the Governors on proper procedure for all aspects of their work.

13.5 Role of Parent Governors

Parent Governors are representative parents rather than representatives of parents. Parent Governors play a vital role on governing bodies, holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. Through the children, they have a first-hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum, and how the school is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables Parent Governors to bring a different perspective to the strategic management of the school. It is important for Parent Governors to establish a rapport with the parental body which elected him/her, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance. Although being available to advise parents on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that Parent Governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no Governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

Achieving a balance between being the impartial representative parent, and the often emotional issues relating to individual children's education, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance include:

- Make yourself available to parents.
- Never press your own child's case at the expense of others.
- Never promise to 'solve a problem' on your own.
- Be wary of bringing an individual's issue to meetings without following the agreed procedures.
- Abide by the agreed protocol regarding agenda items and Any Other Business.
- Keep yourself aware of parental views and concerns.

- Play an active part in Governor meetings.

What are the benefits of being a Parent Governor?

- You have a very privileged and responsible role.
- You have the opportunity to make a difference, not only for your children, but for children in years to come.
- You have the opportunity to make a difference for other parents, and to influence the way in which school works with them.
- You will learn a lot and develop new skills.

How to fulfil your role:

- Attend LGB meetings regularly, and play an active role in committees and decision-making.
- Before making any decision, governors should ask "does this directly further the academy Trust's objectives?".
- Learn all you can about your school.
- Consider how the LGB communicates with parents: could you help them to improve links?
- How accessible is the school – how easy is it for parents to go into school to discuss things with the Headteacher or teachers? Could you give feedback to help the school to be more open and welcoming?
- How accessible are the Governors – do parents ever get the opportunity to meet with them; do they know how to get in touch with the Chair of Governors if they need to? Could you encourage the LGB to be more visible?
- Learn how the school handles complaints, and read the complaints procedure. If another parent approaches you with a complaint, advise them to speak to the Headteacher.
- Be approachable to other parents but make sure you are clear about your role.
- Always represent the school positively.
- As a Governor you are one of a group and must never act alone.
- Always support the decisions of the LGB. Have your say on decisions in meetings, and vote in the way you wish but then support the outcomes of votes – even if you disagree with them.
- **ALWAYS** observe confidentiality. You will handle a lot of highly sensitive and confidential information – do not discuss it with anyone who is not a Governor. Remember, a Governor can be suspended for serious breaches of confidentiality.

How you can help individual parents:

- Occasionally you may be approached by other parents asking for help, or wanting to make a complaint about something the school is, or isn't, doing.
- Make it clear you cannot act for the LGB.
- Do not raise expectations that the school will 'put it right' – there may be underlying issues or background that you are not aware of.
- Keep an open mind – there are at least two sides to every story.
- You may need to explain why the LGB has made a decision in a certain way, so be prepared.

What to do if you experience a conflict between being a parent and being a Governor:

- This can happen – especially if you think the LGB is making decisions which you feel will adversely affect your child(ren).
- If a difficulty arises, take a step back and think things through as objectively as you can.
- If you are concerned, talk to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors.
- Make sure you do not break confidentiality when discussing your concerns outside LGB meetings.

Where to get help, advice and support:

- From other Governors.
- From the Headteacher.
- From the Chair of Governors.
- From the Clerk to the LGB.
- Arrange a Governor mentor or 'buddy' to help you through the first few months.
- Attend the induction training and Governor Development Programme arranged by the Trust's Alliance of Leading Learning.

Although this is a very delicate role, there is ample support and training available. Effective Parent Governors will find working alongside the other members of the LGB both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the LGB fulfils its duties to all children.

13.6 Governors with Additional Responsibilities

Individual Governors will be asked to take responsibility on behalf of the LGB for the oversight of key aspects of the life of the school. These must include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Safeguarding
- Sustainability
- RE/Collective Worship/Citizen & Community Cohesion, and Bullying
- Gifted and Talent (MAP – More Able Pupils)
- Careers IAG

NB: The above are different for Primary schools and these are being reviewed as at January 2021.

The Role of the SEND Governor

The 'Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years' (Published June 2014, updated 30 April 2020) states that each LGB must ensure that there is a designated Governor identified to maintain oversight of SEND provision, or make arrangements for this function to be delegated to an appropriate sub-committee. Once the route for monitoring SEND has been decided upon, it is important that the LGB agrees and plans how and when the monitoring will take place.

The SEND Governor will:

- have an oversight, review and monitor SEND provision. This will include reviewing the SEND action plan ensuring links to the School Development Plan, alongside reviewing progress against success criteria;
- have links to the school's SENCO and monitor provision for all, including costed provision and Top-Up funding;
- ensure that the SEN Information Report is up to date and available to all. The information detailed within the SEN Information Report is a good basis for Governors SEND monitoring activity;
- review the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' process including student, parent/carer voice;

- ensure that the accessibility plan is reviewed on an annual basis and includes details of how access to the curriculum, information, and the physical environment for pupils with disabilities will be increased.

The Role of the Safeguarding Governor

The LGB has a key role, in relation to the safeguarding of all pupils, to maintain strategic oversight of the school's implementation of the safeguarding policy and statutory guidance. The LGB's role is to ensure effective and clear safeguarding policies, that practices are operating throughout their schools, and that their school recognises safeguarding as everyone's responsibility.

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Governing bodies must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance, ensuring that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times." Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

The Safeguarding Governor will monitor that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the training, support, resources and opportunity to perform their role effectively and that there is evidence of a relevant, specific job description.

The Safeguarding Governor will undertake regular checks of the school's single central record (SCR) to determine that the appropriate recruitment checks have been undertaken for all permanent and temporary staff and volunteers, and that the SCR is compliant. The Safeguarding Governor will also ensure that each Governor has an enhanced DBS check and that the school has contacted the Teaching Regulation Agency to check if a proposed Governor is barred as a result of a Section 128 Direction, and that this information is recorded on the SCR.

The Safeguarding Governor will ensure that the DSL and wider staffing team recognises any potential additional needs that children with SEND may have, and that safeguarding systems and procedures recognise and address any potential barriers such as communication or behaviour.

The Safeguarding Governor will maintain strong links with both the school SENCO and Looked After Children (LAC) designated teacher, as well as undertake monitoring visits to review the implementation of their individual action plans.

The Safeguarding governor should also be fully conversant with Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) child protection procedures and ensuring that all staff and Governors are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection.

A role description is available from the Clerk.

The Sustainability Governor
The Governor with responsibility for sustainability will be expected to liaise with the Senior Leadership Group and the CFOO to ensure that decisions made within the school are taken with sustainability in mind.

The RE/Collective Worship/Citizen & Community Cohesion and Bullying Governor
The Governor with responsibility for RE/Collective Worship/Citizen and Community Cohesion, and Bullying, will be expected to liaise with the Senior Leadership Group to ensure that the school is fulfilling its' requirement in the provision of opportunities for collective worship.
This Governor will be assessing whether the school is ensuring that students are prepared and have the life skills and attributes to succeed in Britain and the world in the 21st Century.

The Gifted and Talented (MAP – More Able Pupils) Governor
The Governor with responsibility for Gifted and Talented or MAP will be looking to ensure that the school has procedures in place to identify these students, and that the school's policies are being carried out effectively to ensure that the best is being achieved for these students.

The Careers IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) Governor
The Governor with responsibility for Careers IAG will be working with the Senior Leadership Group to audit the activities that the school undertakes to provide Careers Information, Advice and Guidance to students.

School Development Plan (SDP) Link Governor
Ofsted want to see evidence that Governors are having an impact on a school's strategic direction. The School Development Plan (SDP) lays out that strategic direction split into four categories: Leadership, Teaching, Behaviour and Achievement. Governors are linked to departments and areas in agreement with the Headteacher and the respective Governor, thereby giving Governors a focus for visits into school.

NB Please note the Link Governor roles for Primary Schools are slightly different to those above. These are being reviewed as at January 2021 and will be made available soon.

14 Training for Governors

14.1 Buddy / Mentor
New Governors are paired up with a buddy/mentor to provide them with guidance and help.

14.2 Training Courses
Some of the course available to Governors are listed below (*****these courses are mandatory). All training is subject to availability.

***Raising Awareness and Protecting Children (mandatory training course)**
This awareness session will enable participants to explore issues and deepen understanding in respect of: signs and symptoms of abuse, dealing with child protection disclosure and Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) procedures. Alliance of Leading Learning/SSCB certificates are awarded after the training, which lasts for three years.

***Safer Recruitment (mandatory training course)**
This training teaches Governors how to recruit safely and covers government guidance relevant to safer recruitment, including Working together to safeguard children. Alliance of Leading Learning/SSCB certificates are awarded after the training, which lasts for three years.

***New Governor Induction Training**
This training is designed for recently appointed Governors as an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of school Governors.

Governors Development Programme
This 12 hour programme runs over 6 months (2 hours per month) and seeks to provide an opportunity to explore and develop Governor skills, and to acquire professional knowledge of governance. A key feature of the programme is the notion of the participant as a reflective practitioner. This is someone who is able to deepen their learning about concepts and techniques related to their professional practice through reflecting on what they have learnt and how this will impact on their practice, and then apply this to themselves and their school, reflecting on their personal experience as they progress.

Further training courses are available through our Alliance of Leading Learning (A.L.L) so please discuss any training needs with the Clerk to the Trust's Boards.

15 The Local Governing Body and Ofsted

The Governors should be aware how Ofsted will judge their effectiveness. This applies to both Trustees and Governors, and you should refer to the Terms of Reference for your role as Governor. This will help you to understand that your involvement is strategic, and not in any way to be engaged in the day-to-day management of the school and its functions. The Ofsted judgements are based upon how well the Governors:

- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- contribute to the school's self-review and evaluation, and understand its strengths and weaknesses;
- analyse monitoring data, particularly pupil progress;
- support and strengthen school leadership;
- provide challenge, and hold the Headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety;
- use performance management systems, including the performance management of the Headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management;
- ensure solvency and probity, and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively;
- operate in such a way that statutory duties are met, and priorities are approved;
- engage with key stakeholders;
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.

It is important that this detailed view of the school is shared and understood across the whole LGB. It is quite possible that inspectors will want to meet with more than the Chair of Governors

who, in any case given the short notice of inspections, may not be available when the inspectors are in the school.

Governors should become familiar with the key data sets which show them how the school is performing. This will include the DfE Data Dashboard, and Data Reports produced by the Senior Leadership Group. It is anticipated that the Headteacher's report to Governors will include reference to, and training in, the more complex data sets such as the Fischer Family Trust data.

At every LGB meeting there should be an update on pupil achievement, including attendance and exclusions. There are key questions for Governors to ask about any data they are presented with regarding school improvement:

- What does it mean?
- Why is it like this?
- What are we doing about it?
- How successful have we been so far?

The LGB will meet at specific times of the year, and the Governors should expect to be able to gauge progress in the school from one meeting to the next. In order to do this, Governors need to ask:

- Where were we at the last report?
- Where are we now?
- What progress we have made?
- How do we know?

This is appropriate challenge in the relationship between the LGB, and the Headteacher, and Senior Leadership Group of the school. To ensure that this good practice is seen by Ofsted**, it is crucial that this is clearly minuted by the Clerk to the LGB to enable Ofsted to see the proper levels of challenge and support by the LGB.**

A separate guide has been prepared for Governors regarding preparing for Ofsted inspections. Please speak to the Clerk to obtain a copy.

16 Twenty questions every governing board should ask itself

Governing board effectiveness
Right skills: Do we have the right skills on the governing board?

1. Have we completed a skills audit which informs the governor specification we use as the basis of governor appointment and interview?

Effectiveness: Are we as effective as we could be?

2. How well do we understand our roles and responsibilities, including what it means to be strategic?
3. Do we have a professional clerk who provides legal advice and oversees the governing board's induction and development needs?
4. Is the size, composition and committee structure of our governing board conducive to effective

working?
5. How do we make use of good practice from across the country?

Role of the chair: Does our chair show strong and effective leadership?
6. Do we carry out a regular 360° review of the chair's performance and elect the chair each year?
7. Do we engage in good succession planning so that no governor serves for longer than two terms of office and the chair is replaced at least every six years?
8. Does the chair carry out an annual review of each governor's contribution to the board's performance?

Vision, ethos and strategy
Strategy: Does the school have a clear vision and strategic priorities?
9. Does our vision look forward three to five years, and does it include what the children who have left the school will have achieved?
10. Have we agreed a strategy with priorities for achieving our vision with key performance indicators against which we can regularly monitor and review the strategy?
11. How effectively does our strategic planning cycle drive the governing board's activities and agenda setting?

Engagement: Are we properly engaged with our school community, the wider school sector and the outside world?
12. How well do we listen to, understand and respond to our pupils, parents and staff?
13. How do we make regular reports on the work of the governing board to our parents and local community?
14. What benefit does the school draw from collaboration with other schools and other sectors, locally and nationally?

Effective accountability
Accountability of the executive: Do we hold the school leaders to account?
15. How well do we understand the school's performance data (including in-year progress tracking data) so we can properly hold school leaders to account?
16. Do governors regularly visit the school to get to know it and monitor the implementation of the school strategy?
17. How well does our policy review schedule work and how do we ensure compliance?
18. Do we know how effective performance management of all staff is within the school?
19. Are our financial management systems robust so we can ensure best value for money?

Impact: Are we having an impact on outcomes for pupils?
20. How much has the school improved over the last three years, and what has the governing board's contribution been to this?
Source: NGA article

17 Governor Procedures and Protocols

17.1 Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct

This code sets out the expectations on, and commitment required, from Trustees and Governors, in order for the Board of Trustees and LGBs to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community.

The Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct can be found under the Governors section on the school website and must be read and signed by both Trustees and Governors every year.

17.2 Governor Visits and Protocol

17.2.1 Visiting the School

Governors have a duty to get to know the school and are encouraged to involve themselves in school activities. Visiting the school during school hours is an important part of a Governor's role, enabling them to develop an understanding of the school beyond what is gained by attending LGB meetings.

According to the Guide to the Law for School Governors, visits enable Governors to, *"fulfill their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school".* However, Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. They should arrange their visits in advance with the Headteacher and Clerk. **A record must be kept of school visits and there is a proforma that Governors must complete when they have visited a school or attended a meeting.**

The LGB should plan visits to cover a wide range of schoolwork, and each visit should have a clear purpose.

School visits by Governors can also help them to fulfill their role of 'critical friend' to the Headteacher. Observing the school day in action can be a way of gathering information to ask questions about, or to use towards future policies.

However, visits do not replace professional inspection, or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Headteacher.

17.2.2 Visit Focus

Although not an exhaustive list, visits focus on:

- particular subjects, key stages or classes;
- the use made of the buildings or the site;
- the condition and maintenance of the premises;
- special educational needs;
- literacy and numeracy;
- the use of ICT equipment;
- the impact on the school of any changes eg reduced classes in a key stage;
- relative numbers of questions and responses to the teacher from boys to girls.

17.2.3 Informal Visits

Visits can also take place in an informal capacity. Everyone will be made clear about the capacity in which they are visiting, not to confuse the role.

- The Chair making a regular visit to see the Headteacher.
- To lend a helping hand with a school event.
- To obtain information from the office relating to a LGB/Committee meeting.
- To help in a class.
- To speak to a teacher in relation to your own child.
- To attend a school function or educational visit.

17.2.4 Purpose of Visits

Potential benefits:

For Governors

- To recognise and celebrate success.
- To develop relationships with the staff.
- To get to know the children.
- To recognise different teaching styles.
- To understand the environment in which teachers teach.
- To monitor policies in action.
- To inform decision making.
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them.

For teachers

- To ensure Governors understand the reality of the classroom.
- To get to know Governors.
- To understand better the Governors' roles and responsibilities.
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion.
- To highlight the need for particular resources.

17.2.5 What a Visit is Not About

- A form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of the teacher.
- Checking on progress of own children.
- Pursuing personal agenda.
- Monopolising school/teacher time.

17.2.6 Protocols for Visits

Before a visit a Governor will:

- contact the Headteacher and agree a date, time and focus for the visit;
- ensure that they are familiar with health and safety procedures, including what to do in the event of a fire;
- clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit;
- plan which classes will be visited;
- draw up a timetable for the visit with the Assistant Headteacher/Subject Leader;
- work with the Assistant Headteacher/Subject Leader to ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them;
- discuss with the coordinator if any supporting information is available, eg Ofsted Report, improvement plan, performance data;

- be clear beforehand exactly what you are looking for: try to prepare questions and submit to staff in advance.
- Governors attached to a department or class should arrange an appointment to discuss how to proceed with the link arrangement.
- Governors should always make an appointment with the Clerk when they want to come into school, not just drop in.
- Inform the Clerk of the visit who must keep a record of all visits.

During the visit a Governor will:

- arrive on time, sign in at Reception and display their name badges at all times.
- clarify the timetable with the Assistant Headteacher/Subject Leader and keep to the timetable.
- at all times observe protocol and be sensitive to the surroundings.
- remember they are there to observe and inform themselves. They will intrude as little as possible on the teachers' time.
- only go into classes when invited to do so by the teacher.
- interact but not interrupt. They may talk to pupils in class only when invited to do so by the teacher.
- raise concerns with the teacher if you see something that worries you.
- only attend departmental or staff meetings when invited to do so.
- not go into the staff room unless they are invited.
- ensure that visits are no longer than 1 hour in length.
- be calm and enjoy the visit.

  Please note that members of staff are always free to say that it is not convenient for a Governor to come in at any particular time. Please also remember that you are making the visit on behalf of the LGB and that it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the LGB;

Things observed during a visit:

- Relationship between staff and pupils.
- Relationships between pupils.
- Variety of teaching styles.
- Availability and role of support staff.
- Behaviour and attitude of pupils.
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils.
- How the pupils are grouped.
- How different abilities are catered for.
- Children's work.
- Displays.
- Ethos.
- Equality of opportunity apparent.
- Use of space and working conditions.
- Quality and quantity of equipment and resources.
- Dissemination, monitoring, evaluation and review (see Appendix A).

After the visit a Governor will:

- discuss what they have observed with the teacher and use the opportunity to clarify any issue they are unclear about;

- thank the teacher for supporting them in their role as a Governor;
- refer to the purpose of the visit and consider together whether it has been achieved;
- meet with the Headteacher to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose;
- complete the Governor Visit Proforma (Appendix B), reporting on the focus - the completed form is given to the Headteacher and Clerk and then, after any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the LGB and relevant staff;
- report back to the LGB as appropriate (a written report for the LGB must be available for the next full meeting): Governors must report without giving opinions and where possible, individuals should not be able to be identified.

Annual Programme of Visits

A programme of visits should be planned and spread evenly across the school year in consultation with the Headteacher and the member of staff responsible for the area being monitored/visited.

Monitoring and Review of the School Visit Policy

This policy is monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that visits are achieving the potential benefits identified, to investigate any unexpected benefits, and to evaluate how the school can make practice even better.

18 Appendix A - Dissemination, monitoring, evaluation and review

Governor monitoring can take several forms:

- Pupil interviews.
- Meeting with subject/leader.
- Snapshot of a lesson.
- Walk around the school.

AIMS:

- To know and understand the level of enjoyment pupils have for the subject.
- To understand what pupils like best/least in the subject.
- To know the standards achieved in the subject.
- To know what steps are being taken to improve the subject area.
- To report main findings back to the full Governing Body.

*We invite Governors who are visiting subject leaders to participate in a **Learning Walk**. This should take up to 30 minutes. During the Learning Walk you can expect the subject leader to speak with you about areas listed below. Please raise questions if you need clarification or more information. Ideally the Learning Walk should take place while the children are in class.*

PUPIL INTERVIEWS: (suggested questions to ask a small group of children when walking around the classrooms)

These questions will help you gain an understanding of pupil attitudes toward the subject:

- Tell me about what you are learning today.
- Do you like (select curriculum area being monitored).
- Tell me what you most like doing in (select curriculum area being monitored).
- Is there anything you do not like in (select curriculum area being monitored).

Key questions for subject/learning link Governor discussion with subject leader: (Foundation subjects)

- What is your vision for the subject?
- Do you have a set of minimum expectations?
- What were the Ofsted findings about the subject? (this question is mainly for literacy, maths, science and ICT. Other subjects may have been the focus of a curriculum inspection)
- What are the strengths of the subject? How do you know?
- How do you keep a track of standards and progress in the subject?
- What improvements have you made/planned for this year in the subject?
- What resources does the school have for the subject and how are these organised?
- Are there any additional resource needs?
- How do you help develop other teachers' skills in teaching the subject?

19 Appendix B - Record form for a Governor's School visit

Marches Academy Trust
Governor Visit Proforma

Date:	**Name of Governor:**
Governor's Area of Responsibility:	**Member(s) of Staff seen during visit:**
Reason for Visit (e.g. routine monitoring, specific focus):	
Preparation/background to visit (e.g. reading policy, discussion with Headteacher, review of SDP):	
Information gathered during visit:	
Things I liked / what worked well:	
Things I need clarified or would like to know more about:	
Impact of visit / comments related to the SDP:	
Date for next visit:	
Any other information / further comments:	

20 Appendix C - Useful Links, Guidance and Resources

The Trust's Websites
Marches Academy Trust Website – www.marchesacademytrust.co.uk
The Trust's individual school websites

Ofsted Resources
Find an Ofsted Inspection Report – https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk
All published inspection reports are available via this link.

Ofsted Parent View – https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/
Resources for parents to give feedback on schools and you can also view results.

Department for Education
https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/
Find schools in England and view school performance, characteristics, and spend per pupil data and for academies, their latest set of financial accounts. You can find schools using a map, search or follow the quick links

DfE Governance - https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/running-school-college

Shropshire Learning Gateway (Resource from Shropshire Council)
https://www.shropshirelg.net/

Username: marches.staff
Password: SANDlavender46

Other interesting websites
Questions for Governors - http://www.questionsforgovernors.co.uk/
National Governors Association – www.nga.org.uk
TES Governors Forum - http://community.tes.co.uk/tes_governors/f/17.aspx

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP)
Highlights some of the risks associated with online environments.
www.ceop.police.uk

21 Appendix D - Directory of Trustees and Governors

A directory of all Trustees and Governors with contact details and bios is available through the Clerk to the Trust's Boards. All email addresses can be found on Microsoft Outlook's Global Contact List in your @mmat.org.uk account, except where indicated.

22 Appendix E - Glossary of Terms used in meetings and within reports

Academies – Publicly funded independent secondary schools with sponsors from the private or voluntary sectors or from churches or other faith Sponsors
ACL – Adult and Community Learning
AD(H)D – Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder
Admissions – In community schools part of a Local Authority policy but in foundation and voluntary aided schools the governing body is responsible for setting a policy
Admissions Register – Register of the details of pupils in alphabetical order.
AfL– Assessment for Learning
APA – Annual Performance Assessment
Appraisal – The process of assessing how well a member of staff is carrying out his or her job
APS – Average Points Score
AS – Asperger's Syndrome
ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder
Associate member – A person who is appointed by the Governing Body to work with a committee but who is not a governor
AST - Advanced Skills Teacher
At Risk Register – Children identified by Social Services or Schools as in danger of emotional, physical or sexual abuse or mental cruelty from within their families
Ballot – A method of voting, normally secret
Baseline assessment – An assessment of a child's skills and ability usually made by a teacher within the first 7 days of school entry
Basic skills – Reading, writing and arithmetic
Benchmarking - Comparing school expenditure with broadly similar schools from the LA, the region and nationally
BES – Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
BEST – Behaviour and Education Support Team
Best Value – A policy confirming that governing bodies will work with regards to economy, efficiency and effectiveness
BST – Behaviour Support Team
BVP – Best value policy or plan
CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Capital Expenditure – Spending on building projects and large items of equipment
Carry-forward – Money left unspent at the end of the financial year that is carried forward to the school's budget for the following year
CAF – Common Assessment Framework
Casting Vote – An additional vote to be used by the Chair of Governors if an equal number of votes are cast for and against a motion
Child Protection Register – A central register maintained by Social Services which lists children in the area who are considered to be suffering from, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and for whom there is a protection plan
Clerk to the Governing Body – A person appointed by governors to carry out administrative duties for the governing body and to advise on matters of legality and procedure
Collaboration – Where two or more governing bodies may arrange for any of their functions to be discharged jointly, by holding joint meetings and/or having joint committees

Collective Worship – All maintained schools should provide for collective worship for their pupils. The precise nature at a foundation or voluntary school will depend on the religious character of the school
Community Governors – Governors appointed by the Governing Body to represent community interests. Community Governors can be persons who live or work in the community served by the school or persons who do not work or live close to school but are committed to the good governance and success of the school
Competitive tendering – Obtaining quotes or tenders from two or more suppliers before awarding contracts
Connexions – Government service offering an advice and support service for young people
Contingency Fund – Money set aside for unexpected costs
Core subjects – English, maths and science
COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
Coursework – Work completed over a period of time which counts towards a final mark along with an end of course examination in the case of GCSE and regular tests in the case of GNVQ
CPD – Continuing Professional Development - any activity that increases teachers' knowledge or understanding
CPI – Child Protection Issue
CT – Children's Trust
Curriculum – A broad definition including not just the list of subjects taught but all the pupils' learning experiences at school and the processes of learning as well as the knowledge that is acquired
DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families
DFC – Devolved Formula Capital
Delegated budget – Money provided to schools which governors can manage at their discretion
Delegated powers – Authority given to a committee or the Headteacher to take action on behalf of the Governing Body
Delegation – A process where one body or person gives another body or person authority to take decisions on a particular matter
DfE – Department for Education
Diocese – The area over which a bishop has jurisdiction
DRC – Disability Rights Commission
DSG – Dedicated Schools Grant
Dyslexia – Used to describe the specific learning disorder of children who have difficulty in acquiring reading, spelling, writing and numeracy skills
EAL – English as an Additional Language
EBD – Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
EDP – Education Development Plan which each LA is required to prepare setting out its strategies for improving standards in schools and raising pupil attainment
EOC – Equal Opportunities Commission
EP – Educational Psychologist
Equal Opportunities policy – A governing body's thinking and practice on issues of equality surrounding gender, race, sexuality, disability and class
ES – Extended School
EWO – Education Welfare Officer employed to help pupils and parents where there are problems, particularly regarding attendance
Exclusion – The temporary or permanent banning of a pupil by the Headteacher teacher on disciplinary grounds
Ex-officio – Someone who is a Governor by virtue of their office eg Vicar

Extended Schools – Schools which provide a range of extended services and facilities for the benefit of pupils, parents, families and the wider community
EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage
Failing School – A school identified as requiring special measures following an unsatisfactory Ofsted inspection
Family Centre – Provides pre-school education and opportunities for parents to be involved
Federation – The coming together under one governing body of not more than five maintained schools
Feeder Schools – Some authorities give priority to children from certain primary schools
FFT – Fischer Family Trust
FMSiS – Financial Management Standard in Schools
FOI – Freedom of Information
Foundation Governors – Governors appointed by the foundation body of a voluntary school for the purpose of securing that the character of the school is preserved and developed, and in particular that the school is conducted in accordance with the provision of any trust deed
Foundation schools – Type of school run by the Local Authority but with more freedom than community schools to manage their school and decide on their admissions. The school's land and buildings are either owned by the governing body or by a charitable foundation
FSM – Free School Meals
FT – Floor Target
FTE – Full Time Equivalent
GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education
GTC – The General Teaching Council - an independent professional body for teachers
G&T – Gifted and Talented
HASAW – Health And Safety At Work
HLTA – Higher Level Teaching Assistant
HMCI – Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools
HMI – Her Majesty's Inspectorate
Home-School Agreements – a written contract between school, parents or carers and the pupil. It sets out expectations of attendance, behaviour, standards of education and homework. This is a statutory document for the Governing Body
HSE – Health and Safety Executive
IAG – Information Advice and Guidance
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
IEP – Individual Education Plan devised for meeting the special education needs of individual pupils with needs over and above that of other children
IIP – Investors in People
Inclusion – used to denote that pupils with special and other needs are included in a mainstream school
Increments – Process by which individuals move through their salary scale until they reach the top
Instrument of Government – A legal document setting out the composition of a governing body
Internal Control - A system which encompasses the policies, processes, tasks, behaviours and other aspects of an organisation which is effective and efficient
ITT – Initial Teacher Training
KS – Key Stages - The four stages of the National Curriculum for pupils aged 5-16
KSI – Pupils aged 3-7
KS2 – Pupils aged 7-11
KS3 – Pupils aged 11-14

KS4 – Pupils aged 14-16
LA – Local Authority (previously known as the LEA – the Local Education Authority)
LAC – Looked After Children
LGA – Local Government Association
Liaison Governor – A Governor who acts as a critical friend to the Governor Development Team to monitor the training provision and evaluate the quality of the service provided to all Governors
MFL – Modern Foreign Languages
Mixed Ability – A teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together and not streamed or set
Multi-disciplinary – Two or more professional trained in different specialisms working together to provide support, help and advice
NAHT – National Association of Headteacher teachers
NAPE – National Association for Primary Education, covering the ages from 3 to 13
NASUWT – National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NC – National Curriculum - Established by the 1988 Education Act to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education
National Curriculum – Disapplication - A term used where Curriculum requirements may not apply to a pupil
NCSL – National College for School Leadership
NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training
NFER – National Foundations for Educational Research
NFF - National Formula Funding
NGA – National Governors' Association
NGfL – National Grid for Learning
NHSP – National Healthy Schools Programme
NLE – National Leaders of Education
NOR – Number On Roll
NOV – Notes Of Visit
NPQH – National Professional Qualifications for Headteachers
NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher -Teachers who obtain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) must successfully complete an induction period of three school terms (or equivalent) in order to remain eligible for employment as a teacher in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools
NRA – National Record of Achievement
NTI – Notice to Improve
NTG – Narrowing the Gap
NUT – National Union of Teachers
OCR – Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations Board.
Ofqual – Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator. The body responsible for regulating qualifications, examinations and national curriculum tests in England
Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education. The body which sets standards and arranges school inspections
PAN – Planned Admissions Number - The number of children the LA (or governing body of an Aided School) determines can be admitted to a school
Parent Champion – A person appointed where a school is causing concern to ensure good communication with parents to help them influence decisions about the future of the school
Performance Management – A review of teachers' performance both as individuals and in teams. It sets a framework for Headteachers, teacher and their team leaders to establish and review priorities and objectives

Peripatetic teacher – Normally a teacher who provides specialist instruction eg music at a number of schools
PFI – Private Finance Initiative
PGR – Parent Governor Representatives
PI – Performance Indicators
PIB – Pre-Inspection Briefing
PIPs – Performance Indicators for Primary Schools
PLASC – Pupil Level Annual Schools Census
Plenary – The time at the end of a lesson in which the teacher finds out what children have learnt
PPA – Planning, Preparation and Assessment – 10% non-contact time for teachers
Professional Development Days – Non pupil days set aside for teachers to attend for planning, in service training curriculum or staff development
Progress File – Formerly the National Record of Achievement. Supports pupils from Year 9 in planning their future progression
Prospectus – Document describing the school's ethos for prospective parents. The Education Act defines sections which must be included to allow parents to compare schools
PRP – Performance Related Pay
PRS – Pupil Referral Service
PRU – Pupil Referral Unit
PSA – Parent Support Adviser
PSHE – Personal, Social and Health Education
PSA – Parent Support Adviser – member of school staff offering specific but impartial advice to parents
PSP – Pastoral Support Programme/Plan for pupils at serious risk of permanent exclusion
PTA – Parent Teacher Association
PTR – Pupil/Teacher Ratio, calculated by dividing the number of pupils in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers
QTS – Qualified Teacher Status
Quorum – The number of Governors who must be present to validate the proceedings of a Governors' meeting
RA – Relative Attainment
RAISE Online – Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Evaluation – Online performance and assessment reports produced nationally
RAP – Raising Attainment Plan
Record of Achievement – A profile detailing the pupil's formal and informal achievements in secondary school. May include samples of work and pupil's own self-assessment
Remodelling – Remodelling is set out in a national agreement that aims to reform the workforce. It is about giving teachers more time and support in order to raise standards, increase job satisfaction and improve the status of the profession
Resolution – A formal resolution made at a meeting which has been voted upon and agreed.
RI – Registered Inspector, who is authorised by Ofsted to lead an inspection team
ROA - Record of Achievement
SACRE – Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. Local statutory body which advises on religious education and collective worship
School Profile – A report by governors on the school's performance, pre-populated with data supplied by the DCSF
SDP – School Development Plan
SEAL – Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
SEF – Self/School Evaluation Form

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability
SENCO – SEN Co-ordinator. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision in the school
SHA – Secondary Headteachers Association
SIMS – Schools Information Management Systems
SIP – School Improvement Partner / Plan
SLT – Senior Leadership Team
SMART Targets – An acronym for School Attainment Targets – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-limited
SMT – Senior Management Team
Special school – A school for children whose special educational needs cannot be met within a mainstream school
Target Setting – Each autumn, governing bodies of all maintained primary and secondary schools must set targets for improving pupil performance
T&L – Teaching and Learning
Teachers TV – A digital television channel and website which enables teachers and schools to learn by sharing practical ideas and information
TES – Times Educational Supplement
Threshold – Teachers may apply to be assessed to be paid above the threshold of their incremental ceiling
TLRs – Teaching and Learning Responsibility – additional payment for specific teaching and learning responsibilities over and beyond the normal teaching role
UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service – a central agency for processing applications for university courses
UNISON – Union of local authority, health and other public sector employees
UPS – Upper Pay Spine
Value Added – Shows the progress made by an individual pupil or groups of pupils compared with the average progress made by similar pupils nationally between the Key Stages
VA – Voluntary Aided – Schools with a foundation which appoints most of the governors. The governing body is the admission authority and employs the staff
VC – Voluntary Controlled – Schools with a foundation which appoints some of the governors. The **LA** (Local Authority) is the admission authority and employs the staff
Vertical grouping – Classes formed (in primary schools) with pupils of different age groups
Virement – A local authority term to enable monies to be transferred from one budget to another
YJB – Youth Justice Board
YOT – Youth Offending Team