



Scheme of Delegation

2024/25

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1 Rationale

- 1.1 As a charitable company, limited by guarantee, The Gosforth Federated Academies Limited (the “Gosforth Group” or the “Trust”) is governed by a Board of Directors also known as Trustees.
- 1.2 As a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the Board of Trustees is accountable in law for all major decisions about their academies and any subsidiary companies.
- 1.3 The Trust Board, however, is not required to carry out all the Trust’s governance functions and many can, and should, be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Executive Team, the Trust Board’s committees, and the Academy Advisory Groups (AAG). Without such delegation, the individual or committee has no power to act.
- 1.4 The Scheme of Delegation (SoD) is the key document that defines the lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT to ensure that Members, Trustees, board committees, AAGs, executive leadership and academy Principals understand their roles and responsibilities.
- 1.5 This overarching SoD for all decision making in the Trust should not be confused with the written scheme of delegation of financial powers referred to in the Education and Skills Funding Agency’s [Academy Trust Handbook 2023](#).
- 1.6 As the MAT matures and grows the workings of the MAT, both in terms of governance and management are likely to change. The SoD must be reviewed annually, with changes made as the context changes, in recognition of the need to be responsive to changing circumstances and to adapt accordingly. It is important to the Trustees to ensure that all involved in governance are made aware of any changes and what these mean in practice.
- 1.7 This Scheme of Delegation applies to all academies within the Gosforth Group:
 - Callerton Academy
 - Gosforth Academy
 - Great Park Academy
 - Jesmond Park Academy
 - Junior High Academy
 - North Gosforth Academy

2. Characteristics of an effective scheme of delegation

- 2.1 In accordance with the Department for Education’s (DfE) [Governance handbook 2020](#), the Gosforth Group’s scheme of delegation:
 - Reflects the Trust’s ethos, promoting a positive climate and a culture of honesty, transparency, and accountability for the benefit of all stakeholders;
 - Ensures that executive leadership is clear about which decisions the Board of Trustees retains, and the extent of executive powers
 - Identifies responsibility for the appointment and performance management of the CEO, the Executive team and academy Principals;

- Ensures that the role of executive leadership is fully understood throughout the Trust; and
- Identifies where the Board of Trustees retains responsibility for:
 - determining policy;
 - management of risk;
 - oversight of budgets and financial management;
 - oversight of educational performance.

3.0 Governance structure and accountability

3.1 Vision and ethos

- 3.1.1 'Create your future' encapsulates our purpose as a MAT: to educate, support and nurture all of our students so they can achieve their potential and fulfil their ambitious aspirations.
 - 3.1.2 We are a dynamic and diverse MAT – this means we have a clear energy and purpose and all students are valued equally, regardless of their background or ability. We pride ourselves on our comprehensive, diverse intake and our inclusive approach.
 - 3.1.3 Our principal aim is to encourage high expectations and high standards of achievement, both academic and personal. Our values embrace honesty, trust, reliability, creativity, respect for the legitimate rights of others, care for the vulnerable members of society, regard for the environment and kindness towards other people.
 - 3.1.4 We believe that a safe, calm, friendly, disciplined atmosphere, in which hard work and co-operation are respected, is the best way to promote these values.
- 3.2 The DfE's Governance handbook (October 2020) confirms three core governance functions, and the Board of Trustees fulfil these responsibilities with passion and rigour to determine and support the vision and ethos of the Gosforth Group.

DfE Governance Handbook 2020 – Effective Governance¹

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and

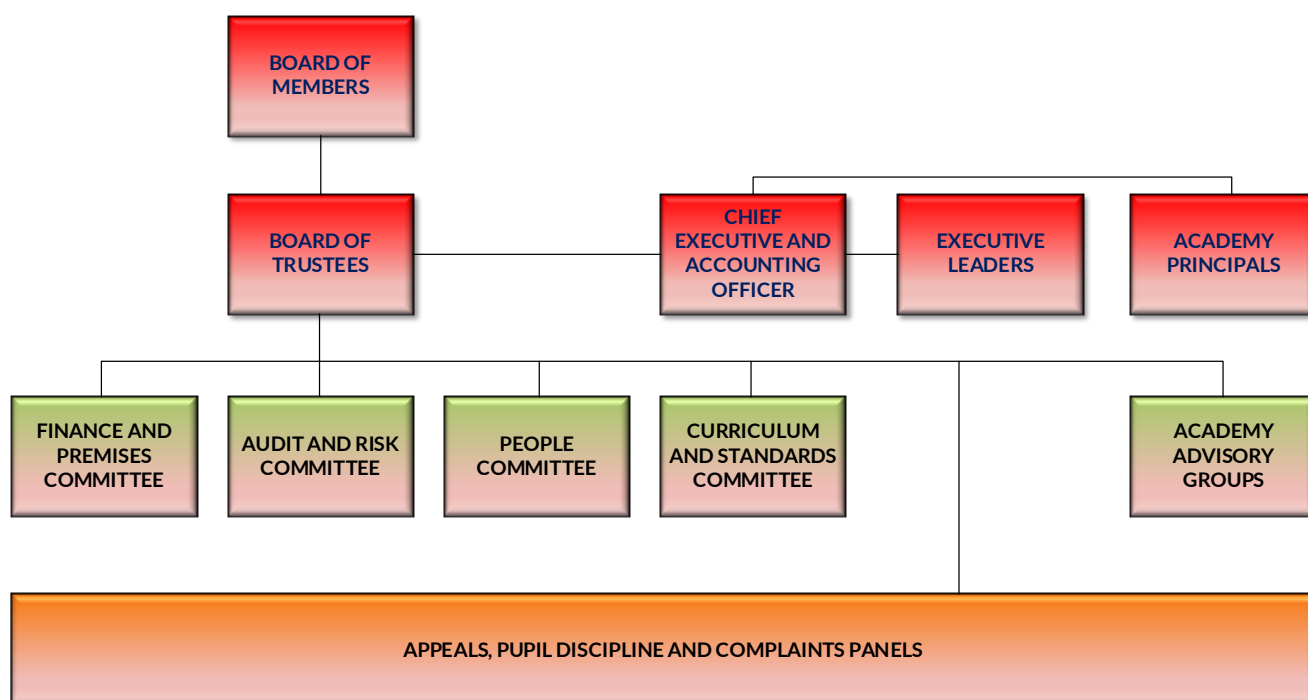
Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

- 3.3 This is achieved through a model and structure with three clear layers of governance: Members, Trustees, and Committees, including Academy Advisory Groups.

¹ Department for Education (October 2020), 'Governance handbook. Academy trusts and maintained schools', page 13

- 3.3.1 The **Board of Members** - ensures the Trust meets its charitable objective by appointing trustees, agreeing articles of association, and appointing the auditors
 - 3.3.2 The **Board of Trustees** – is the employer and accountable body, which carries out the core governance functions and ensures compliance with statutory and regulatory functions, including appointing the Chief Executive Officer
 - 3.3.3 The **Board Committees**, including **AAGs** – are responsible for specific tasks as outlined in their terms of reference and for oversight of academy performance, escalating any concerns to the Board of Trustees
- 3.4 The Trust's model of delegation makes it clear that:
- Members have a limited yet distinct and vitally important role;
 - The Board of Trustees is responsible for the core governance functions;
 - The Board of Trustees appoint the CEO, to whom it delegates responsibility for the conduct and performance of the trust, including the performance of the academies within the trust, and for its financial management.
- 3.5 Establishing the committees
- 3.6 In order to support the effective operation of the Trust and the Academies, the Board has established a number of committees to which it has delegated certain of its powers and functions. These terms of reference (**Terms of Reference**) set out the constitution, membership, and proceedings of the committees the Board has established. Detailed terms of reference for each committee are included at Appendix A, which confirms each committee's purpose, remit and status.
- 3.7 In summary, the Board has established three different types of committees:
- 1. Board committees which are established to deal with Trust-wide matters such as educational performance and quality, audit, finance, pay and performance management; and
 - 2. Academy Advisory Groups which are established by the Board to support the effective operation of the Academies. AAGs provide links to parents and the community, as well as providing additional scrutiny of how the Trust is managing its schools. AAGs act as a critical friend to the Principals on matters of performance, education, behaviour attendance and staff performance. They provide support in the effective operation of the Trust and its policies and provide a vehicle for Trust board engagement. They will escalate any concerns to the Board of Trustees
 - 3. The Board also convenes various sub-committees/ panels to consider matters in relation to appeals concerning pupil discipline, pupil admissions, staffing appointments and dismissals, staff pay, as well as independent panels to consider formal complaints.
- 3.8 The Board has resolved to establish the following Board Committees:
- 3.8.1 Finance and Premises Committee
 - 3.8.2 Audit and Risk Committee
 - 3.8.3 People Committee
 - 3.8.4 Curriculum and Standards Committee

- 3.9 The Board has also resolved to establish AAGs for its academies (6), each as a separate committee of the Board. An AAG may act in respect of two or more academies, if required.



3.10 Exercising powers and decisions

- 3.10.1 The Trust ensures that there is separation between the individuals who sit as Members, Trustees and Academy Advisors to ensure objectivity when exercising powers under this scheme.
- 3.10.2 The Board of Trustees require that all powers and decisions are determined in accordance with the Trust's policies and any statutory or regulatory requirements, and in a manner consistent with the Trust's vision and values.
- 3.10.3 A Governance Code of Conduct for Trustees and Academy Advisors sets out the standards expected of individuals, when exercising their role and responsibilities. It incorporates the seven principles of public life that apply to all individuals elected or appointed to public office, or to work in, all sectors that provide public services; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- 3.10.4 Members, Trustees, Academy Advisors, and selected staff complete a Declaration of Interests to identify any conflicts of interests and ensure any effect on decision-making is prevented.
- 3.10.5 Detailed delegated duties and delegated authorities are provided at Appendix B, illustrating the specific delegation of decision-making powers the Board of Trustees has approved.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The role of members

- 4.1.1 The Members of the Trust are guardians of the Trust's governance and must ensure it carries out its charitable objective.
- 4.1.2 There must be at least three Members, although the Trust conforms to the DfE's preference for at least five; Members are not permitted to be employees of the Trust.
- 4.1.3 The Members agree the Trust's articles of association, appoint Trustees and appoint the Trust's external auditors.
- 4.1.4 The Members should receive information about the Trust's business and receive the annual report and accounts. If they have concerns that the Trust is not carrying out its charitable objective, Members should remove the Trustees that are failing to fulfil this responsibility.

4.2 The role of the Chair of Trustees and Chairs of Committees

- 4.2.1 The Chair of the Board of Trustees provides visionary strategic non-executive leadership to the Trust taking the lead in the effective functioning of the Board of Trustees with a vital role in setting the highest expectations for professional standards of governance.
- 4.2.2 It is the Chair of the Board's responsibility to give the Board of Trustees clear leadership and direction, keeping it focused on its core functions.
- 4.2.3 A sounding board for the CEO, the Chair of the Board provides support as well as challenge. This includes working collaboratively with the CEO to engage with the Regional Schools Director, the DfE and local authorities.
- 4.2.4 No person may act as Chair of any Board Committee unless they are also a Trustee.
- 4.2.5 The Board of Trustees and each Board Committee, , shall at the first meeting of each academic year elect a chair and vice-chair of the committee. The committee will elect a temporary replacement from among the members present at any meeting where the Chair is absent unless a vice-chair has been previously elected.
- 4.2.6 The AAGs shall at the first meeting of each academic year appoint an Academy Advisor² to act as Chair of the AAG. At each meeting, if the Chair is absent, the AAG will elect a temporary replacement from among the members present at the meeting unless a vice-chair has been previously elected.
- 4.2.7 No person may act as Chair of any committee if they are an employee of the Trust.

² For the academic year 2024-25 the chair of the AAG will continue to be a trustee to maintain effectiveness during the transition and development of the AAGs.

- 4.2.8 The Board of Trustees may appoint a Chair to an AAG if the performance of the AAG is judged to require a Chair appointed by the Trustees.

4.3 The role of trustees

- 4.3.1 The Trust is a charitable company and so Trustees are both charity trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and company directors (within the terms of the Companies Act 2006).
- 4.3.2 Trustees are bound by both charity and company law so the terms 'trustees' and 'directors' are often used interchangeably. Gosforth Group uses the term Trustee as it avoids the possible confusion caused when executive and senior leaders are called directors but are neither company directors nor trustees. The use of Trustee also serves to highlight the overarching charitable purpose of the organisation, distinguishing it from other directorships that may be held in the private sector.
- 4.3.3 Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the Trust, and in accordance with the provisions set out in the memorandum and articles of association and its funding agreement are legally accountable for all statutory functions and for the performance of all the academies within the Trust; they do this by carrying out the core governance functions, outlined in section 3.2.
- 4.3.4 The Board of Trustees must approve a written scheme of financial delegation and if they choose to delegate to board committees and AAGs, must approve a written scheme of delegation and committee terms of reference.
- 4.3.5 The Trust creates information pathways between the Board of Trustees, board committees, AAGs and the CEO so that concerns or celebrations can be shared.

4.4 The role of committees

- 4.4.1 Trustees delegate some governance functions to board committees, one of which must include audit and risk which advises on the adequacy of the Trust's controls and risks.
- 4.4.2 Board committees must have at least five Trustees in membership, and Trustees must be in the majority for voting purposes; it is usual for the Board of Trustees to appoint board committee chairs and committee members according to their skills.
- 4.4.3 The Board of Trustees delegates detailed scrutiny of financial management and performance to the Finance and Premises Committee.
- 4.4.4 The Board will appoint and remove all committee members.
- 4.4.5 The current composition and membership of Board Committee members are set out in the terms of reference and in the register of committee members maintained by the Trust and which at the date of adoption of this SoD is published on the trust website at [MAT governance structure](#)

- 4.4.6 No trustee of the Board can serve on both the Finance and Premises Committee matters and the Audit and Risk Committee.
- 4.4.7 The Board recognises the overriding principles of the Academy Trust Handbook (the **ATH**) and that the Audit and Risk Committee should be established in such a way as to achieve internal scrutiny which delivers objective and independent assurance for the Trust. In establishing the Audit and Risk Committee the Board will adhere to the principles of the AFH and:
 - 4.4.7.1 staff employed by the Trust will not be members of the Committee, but may attend meetings to provide information and participate in discussions: and
 - 4.4.7.2 the Trust's Accounting Officer and other relevant senior staff will routinely attend committee meetings in the capacity set out above.

4.5 The role of the Academy Advisory Groups

- 4.5.1 Trustees delegate some governance functions to AAGs; the Articles of Association do not require Trustee members of local governing bodies and by committing to the separation of individuals on each tier in the governance structure, trusts are able to demonstrate transparent decision making and prevent bias and conflicts from emerging, thus strengthening the governance checks and balances within the Trust. Currently there are a limited number of Trustee members on AAGs to enhance communications and governance.
- 4.5.2 The Board of Trustees approves the appointment of the AAG chairs and the appointment of the Academy Advisors.
- 4.5.3 In accordance with the DfE Governance Handbook the Trust may choose to delegate to an AAG that oversees more than one academy, and these committees may include Trustees.
- 4.5.4 Parent representation will be at Academy Advisory Group level with parents elected to sit on the AAGs.
- 4.5.5 AAGs afford a valued point of consultation and representation in the development of the Trust's policies and are the recipients of detailed information about how their academies are being managed.
- 4.5.6 The AAGs are tasked with scrutinising management information thus providing assurance to Trustees that the academy is:
 - operating within the ethos and values of the trust and creating a positive climate for all stakeholders
 - working within agreed policies
 - meeting agreed targets
 - engaging with stakeholders
 - acting as an ambassador for the trust
- 4.5.7 The Board of Trustees demonstrates the value it puts on local governance by ensuring effective channels of communication between Trustees and Academy

Advisors, as well as providing specific training and development programmes for all involved in the governance of the Trust.

4.6 The role of the Chief Executive Officer

- 4.6.1 The trustees delegate the day-to-day management of the Trust to the CEO, line managing in line with the Trust's appraisal and performance management policies.
- 4.6.2 The CEO is also the Accounting Officer and is responsible for the performance of the Trust as a whole, and has a personal responsibility to parliament for the regularity, propriety and value for money, and for assuring the Board of Trustees about compliance with the funding agreements and the Academy Trust Handbook.
- 4.6.3 The CEO is responsible for the leadership and management of the central executive team and the academy's Principals and reports to the Board of Trustees and its committees.

4.7 The role of Principals

- 4.7.1 The CEO delegates the day-to-day management of the Trust's academies to Principals, line managing them in accordance with the Trust's appraisal and performance management policies.
- 4.7.2 Principals share information about how the Trust is managing the academy with the AAGs so that Advisors build an understanding about how the academy operates and are enabled to monitor and scrutinise how key policies and improvement plans are working in practice.

4.8 Role descriptors

- 4.8.1 More detailed role descriptions are provided at Appendix C.

5 Proceedings of committee meetings

- 5.1 The Committees will meet as often as is necessary to fulfil their responsibilities but at least four times a year.
- 5.2 The quorum for the transaction of the business of a Board Committee shall be a majority of the Committee members and no vote on any matter shall be taken at a meeting of the Committee unless the majority of members of the Committee present are Trustees.
- 5.3 The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that a clerk is provided to take minutes at meetings of the Board Committees.
- 5.4 Every matter to be decided at a meeting of a committee must be determined by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting on the matter.
- 5.5 Each Committee member present in person shall be entitled to one vote.

- 5.6 Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- 5.7 A register of attendance shall be kept for each Committee meeting and published annually.
- 5.8 Committees may invite attendance at meetings from persons who are not Committee members to assist or advise on a particular matter or range of issues. Such persons may speak with the permission of the Chair but shall not be entitled to vote.
- 5.9 Any Trustee may attend Committee meetings where they are not Committee members, with the permission of the Chair but shall not be entitled to vote.
- 5.10 All Committee papers shall be circulated to Committee members at least five working days in advance of the scheduled meeting.
- 5.11 Committee members' interests
- 5.12 Committee members are required to declare any business or other interests in any item being discussed at a meeting.
- 5.13 Each committee member, if present at a committee meeting, should disclose their interest, withdraw from the meeting and not vote on a matter if:
- 5.13.1 there may be a conflict between their interests and the interests of any of the Academies or the Trust;
 - 5.13.2 there is reasonable doubt about their ability to act impartially in relation to a matter where a fair hearing is required; or
 - 5.13.3 they have a personal interest (this is where they and/or a close relative will be directly affected by the decision of the committee in relation to that matter) in a matter.
- 5.14 Reporting and communication procedures
- 5.15 Within 10 working days of each meeting each committee will:
- 5.15.1 produce and agree draft minutes of its meetings;
 - 5.15.2 provide a summary document identifying:
 - (i) decisions made;
 - (ii) recommendations to the Board;
 - (iii) any items of current concern highlighting mitigating actions agreed at the meeting for the information of, or communication to the Board;
 - (iv) any items of recognition and celebration for communication to the Board; and
 - (v) items for reporting requiring further discussion by the Board, together with the appropriate committee reports.
- 5.16 Committee reports will be sent to the Board within 15 working days of each committee meeting.

- 5.17 Committees shall arrange for the production and delivery of such other reports or updates as requested by the Board from time to time.
- 5.18 Each committee shall conduct an annual review of its work and the powers and functions delegated to it under its terms of reference and shall report the outcome and make recommendations to the Board.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 21 March 2024

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Board of Trustees

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Board of Trustees is legally responsible for the performance of each academy. The Board requires the active support of Academy Advisory Groups (AAGs) to ensure effective governance
- 1.2 The Board of Trustees shall exercise duties and powers as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Funding Agreements. Its remit in accordance with the Governance Handbook focuses on:
 - 1.2.1 Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - 1.2.2 Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
 - 1.2.3 Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held at least quarterly, i.e. at least four per annum. Additional meetings may be convened if required.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the Board of Trustees is set out in the Articles of Association, as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Eleven (11) Trustees appointed by the Members on the nomination of the Trustees in post with a view to the candidates providing particular skills and experience relevant to the running of the Trust and Company.
 - 3.1.2 The Chief Executive Officer (ex-officio)
 - 3.1.3 Co-opted Trustees appointed by the Trustees

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To deliver governance and strategic leadership that sets and champions, vision, ethos and strategy;
- 4.2 To ensure accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance

- 4.3 To maintain a Board of Trustees and appoint senior leaders with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
- 4.4 To develop and maintain structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- 4.5 To uphold and sustain compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
- 4.6 To advance and support continuous evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

5 Schedule of business

- 5.1 The Board will develop an annual schedule of business to ensure the consideration, reporting and communication of business transactions is complete and compliant, including the below matters, though not limited to:

5.1.1 Standing items

- Communications from the Department for Education (DfE)
- Communications from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- Annual election of a chair and vice-chair
- Receipt of minutes from all Board Committees and AAGs for communication purposes
- Receipt of committee information, statements, and papers for reporting purposes

5.1.2 Financial management

- Review of census numbers against budget projections
- Management accounts
- Review and approval of annual budgets
- Review and approve the internal annual audit plan
- Review and approval of the risk register, risk policy and risk management framework
- Review and maintenance of internal financial handbooks and procedures
- Review of the external audit plan
- Oversight of the Teachers' Pensions audit
- Review of the draft Annual Report and financial statements
- Recommend the appointment of external auditors to the Board of Members

5.1.3 Educational performance

- Statistical information regarding pupil performance, pupil attendance, pupil exclusions and suspensions

5.1.4 Human Resources

- Staff sickness and absence information

- Staff leavers and starters information: staff turnover
- Staff wellbeing survey information

5.1.5 Board effectiveness

- Regular review of board effectiveness
- Annual skills audits
- Training and development plans

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Academy Advisory Group

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Board of Trustees is legally responsible for the performance of each academy but to do this the Board requires the active support of Academy Advisory Groups (AAGs) to ensure effective governance across each of the academies.
- 1.2 The AAGs assist the Board of Trustees to exercise its duties and powers as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Funding Agreements. The AAGs remit is to support the Board to comply with the requirements of the Governance Handbook to focus on:
 - 1.2.1 Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - 1.2.2 Holding local academy leaders to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
 - 1.2.3 Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held at least four times a year. Additional, ad-hoc meetings may be convened if required.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the Academy Advisory Group is as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Up to nine (9) AAG members comprising of:
 - i. Up to five (5) community members
 - ii. Two (2) staff representatives (one teaching and one support)
 - iii. Two (2) parent representatives
 - 3.1.2 Ex officio members will include the Chief Executive Officer, or their nominee, and the academy Principal.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To undertake responsibility for any of the decision-making powers delegated by the Board of Trustees
- 4.2 To support the effective operation of the Trust and its policies
- 4.3 To provide support and challenge to academy leaders
- 4.4 To provide a vehicle for Board of Trustee engagement with the academy, its parents and local community, to help ensure that the Trustees stay connected

- 4.5 To bring issues and risks to the attention of the Board of Trustees
- 4.7 To help to ensure that the Trust works as one entity, in the interests of all its academies equally.

5 Remit and responsibilities

- 5.1 The powers and functions delegated by the Board to the AAG are set out in detail in the delegated duties and authorities in Appendix B as approved by the Board and in summary include the following:
 - 5.1.1 To oversee the running of the academies in terms of learning, standards, safety, and wellbeing.
 - 5.1.2 To hold local academy leadership to account for academic performance, quality of care and provision.
 - 5.1.3 To oversee and monitor the effectiveness of learning strategies.
 - 5.1.4 To consider academy budget monitoring information, as provided by the Director of Finance.
 - 5.1.5 To act as a critical friend to the Principal.
 - 5.1.6 To adopt financial prudence in managing the financial affairs of the Trust in so far as these relate to the Academy and are delegated to them in order to support the Board and its committees in relation to proper use of funds and delivering high quality educational provision.
 - 5.1.7 To represent and champion the views of the community, including but not limited to discussions and issues that relate to community engagement and activity and make recommendations to the principal.
 - 5.1.8 To support the Principal or Principals in recruitment and selection, grievance, disciplinary and exclusion processes where appropriate.
 - 5.1.9 To promptly implement and comply with any policies or procedures communicated to the AAG by the Board from time to time.
 - 5.1.10 To support the Trust's senior management staff to deal with complaints pursuant to the Trust policy on complaints.
 - 5.1.11 To draw any significant recommendations and matters of concern to the attention of the Board.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Finance and Premises Committee

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Finance and Premises Committee is responsible for the executive oversight, governance and validation of the Trust's responsibilities to the Secretary of State as outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook
- 1.2 The Finance and Premises Committee has high level responsibility and ownership of financial operations, controls and fiscal governance as well as accountability for all of the Trust's broader business and central service operations and functions.

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held quarterly, i.e., four per annum. Additional, ad-hoc meetings may be convened if required.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the Finance and Premises Committee is as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Five (5) Trustees normally appointed by the Members on the nomination of the Trustees in post with a view to the candidates providing skills and experience relevant to the running of the Trust and Company.
 - 3.1.2 The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Finance and Director of Estates and Facilities may regularly attend meetings in an advisory capacity.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook
- 4.2 To acknowledge all correspondence from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), ensure it is brought to the attention of the Trust Board, and respond within the timelines required by the ESFA to secure compliance and effective financial governance
- 4.3 To ensure the provision of an annual budget, in accordance with ESFA timelines, that forms the basis for financial monitoring, forecasting and budgetary control. This will include the provision of monthly management accounts at both Trust and individual academy level, to monitor the overall financial operating performance of the Gosforth Group
- 4.6 To assure effective financial governance in financial operations by rigorously assessing the effective impact of expenditure, including best value and contract management. This will also include the maximisation of all sources of income to seek to drive efficiency and leveraging the economies of scale that are possible with the multi academy structure.
- 4.7 To approve such policies as delegated to the Committee by the Board of Trustees.

5 Remit and responsibilities

5.1 The powers and functions delegated by the Board to the Finance and Premises Committee are as set out below.

5.1.1 Funding

5.1.1.1 To consider each of the Academies indicative funding, notified annually by the DfE/ESFA and to assess its implications for the relevant Academy. This will be in consultation with the CEO and their executive and corporate teams, in advance of the financial year, drawing any matters of significance or concern to the attention of the Board.

5.1.1.2 To consider and recommend acceptance or non-acceptance of the Trust and Academies budgets each financial year.

5.1.2 Budgeting

5.1.2.1 To contribute to the formulation of the Academies strategic plans, through the consideration of financial priorities and proposals, in consultation with the relevant Principal and corporate service leads and with the stated and agreed aims and objectives of the relevant Academy.

5.1.2.2 To receive and make recommendations on the broad budget headings and areas of expenditure to be adopted each year. This will include the level and use of any contingency fund or balances, ensuring the compatibility of all such proposals with the development priorities set out in each of the Academies' strategic plans.

5.1.2.3 To liaise with and receive reports from appropriate committees and make recommendations to those committees about the financial aspects of matters being considered by them.

5.1.2.4 To consider the spending plans of other committees and report back and advise the Board.

5.1.2.5 To delegate the day-to-day management of the approved budget to relevant the Principal and other budget holders, within agreed authorisation limits.

5.1.2.6 To consider requests for supplementary expenditure and make appropriate recommendations to the Board.

5.1.2.7 To review financial policy including consideration of long-term planning and resourcing in accordance with the Trust's and each of the Academies' development plans.

5.1.3 Expenditure

5.1.3.1 To monitor and review expenditure on a regular basis and ensure compliance with the overall financial plan for the Trust and Academies,

and with the financial regulations of the Trust, drawing any matters of concern to the attention of the Board.

5.1.4 Financial procedures

5.1.4.1 To monitor and review procedures for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of financial procedures, on a regular basis, including the implementation of bank account arrangements and where appropriate make recommendations for improvement.

5.1.4.2 To prepare the financial statement to form part of the annual report of the Board to stakeholders and for filing in accordance with requirements of the Companies Act, Charity Commission and Funding Agreement (including the ATH).

5.1.5 Health and safety

5.1.5.1 To receive each term the relevant health and safety reports from the Health and Safety Manager and academy Principals and advise as necessary.

5.1.5.1 To monitor compliance with the Trust's Health and Safety policies and statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

5.1.6 Asset Management

5.1.6.1 To receive reports from the Director of Estates and Facilities and relevant academy Principals on the management of assets including premises and their security.

5.1.6.2 To confirm that an asset recording system is in place, including an inventory and fixed asset register for each Academy.

5.1.7 Property Management

5.1.7.1 To determine the use of the academy premises and grounds outside academy sessions regarding the lettings and charging policy (excluding where lettings are managed by the PFI company).

5.1.7.2 To ensure that the academy premises are inspected on an annual basis and that a planned and costed statement of priorities is prepared and reviewed.

5.1.7.3 To ensure the responsibilities of the Board under relevant environmental and sustainability legislation and obligations are met.

5.1.7.4 To advise the Board on environmental issues to ensure academies are acting as a responsible institution in their duty to conserve energy, materials and with regard to the local community.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Audit and Risk Committee

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for the executive oversight, governance, and validation of the Trust's responsibilities to the Secretary of State as outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook
- 1.2 The Audit and Risk Committee has high level responsibility and ownership of the audit and risk management framework relating to operations, controls and governance as well as accountability for all of the Trust's broader business and central service operations and functions.

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held quarterly, i.e., four per annum. Additional, ad-hoc meetings may be convened if required.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the Finance and Audit Committee is as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Five (5) Trustees normally appointed by the Members on the nomination of the Trustees in post with a view to the candidates providing particular skills and experience relevant to the running of the Trust and Company.
 - 3.1.2 The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance attend meetings in an advisory capacity.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook
- 4.2 To acknowledge all correspondence from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), ensure it is brought to the attention of the Trust Board, and respond within the timelines required by the ESFA to secure compliance and effective audit and risk management.
- 4.3 To recommend to Members external financial auditors to conduct statutory audit and assurance statements of Gosforth Group, as well as the appointment of an independent internal assurance provider to deliver in-year financial and process assurance
- 4.4 To assure effective governance in all trust operations and development plans and strategies.
- 4.7 To approve such policies as delegated to the Committee by the Board of Trustees.

5 Remit and responsibilities

5.1 The powers and functions delegated by the Board to the Audit and Risk Committee are as set out below.

5.1.1 External audit

5.1.1.1 To consider the appointment of the external auditor and assess independence of the external auditor, ensuring that key audit personnel are rotated at appropriate intervals.

5.1.1.2 To recommend the audit fees to the Board and pre-approve any fees in respect of non-audit services provided by the external auditor and to ensure that the provision of non-audit services does not impair the external auditors' independence or objectivity.

5.1.1.3 To oversee the process for selecting the external auditor and make appropriate recommendations through the Board to the members of the Trust to consider at any general meeting where the accounts are laid before members.

5.1.1.4 To discuss with the external auditor the nature and scope of each forthcoming audit and to ensure that the external auditor receives the fullest co-operation.

5.1.1.5 To review the external auditor's annual management letter and all other reports and recommendations, together with the appropriateness of management's response.

5.1.1.6 To review the performance of the external auditor on an annual basis.

5.1.1.7 To recommend to the Board the appointment/re-appointment of the external auditor.

5.1.1.8 To review and consider the circumstances surrounding any resignation or dismissal of the external auditor.

5.1.2 Internal audit

5.1.2.1 To set and review the internal audit programme and ensure that the internal audit function is adequately resourced and has appropriate standing within the Trust.

5.1.2.2 To review the reports and recommendations of the internal audit, together with the appropriateness of management's response.

5.1.2.3 To monitor the implementation of action agreed by management in response to reports from the external auditor internal audits.

5.1.3 Financial management and policies

5.1.3.1 To keep under review the Trust's financial management and reporting arrangements, providing constructive challenge (where necessary) to the actions and judgements of management in relation to the management and financial accounts, statements and reports and the annual accounts and financial statements, prior to submission to the Board, paying particular attention to:

- I. critical accounting policies and practices, and any changes in them
- II. decisions requiring a major element of judgement
- III. the extent to which the financial statements are affected by any unusual or complex transactions in the year and how they are disclosed
- IV. the clarity and transparency of disclosures
- V. significant adjustments resulting from the audit
- VI. the going concern assumption
- VII. compliance with accounting standards
- VIII. compliance with DfE and legal requirements

5.1.3.2 To review the Trust's policy and procedures for handling allegations from whistleblowers.

5.1.3.3 To review the Trust's policies and procedures for handling allegations of fraud, bribery and corruption.

5.1.3.4 To receive reports on the outcome of investigations of suspected or alleged impropriety.

5.1.3.5 To review the adequacy of policies for ensuring compliance with relevant regulatory, legal and code of conduct requirements.

5.1.3.6 To ensure that any significant losses are investigated and reported to the DfE/ESFA where required.

5.1.3.7 To review the Trust's risk management policy, strategy, processes and procedures for the identification, assessment, evaluation, management, and reporting of risks.

5.1.3.8 To review the adequacy and robustness of risk registers.

5.1.3.9 To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements, as well as its arrangements for securing value for money, through reports and assurances received from management, internal audit, the external auditor and any other relevant independent assurances or reports.

5.1.3.10 To review all risk and control related disclosure statements, in particular the Trust's annual "Statement on Internal Control", together with any

associated reports and opinions from management, the external auditor and Responsible Officer, prior to endorsement by the Trust Board.

- 5.1.3.11 To review any recommendations made by the Secretary of State for Education for improving the financial management of the Trust and its academies.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

People Committee

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The People Committee is responsible for the executive oversight, governance, and validation of the Trust's responsibilities to the Secretary of State as outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook in relation to the deployment and management of human resources, and any relevant and associated employment legislation, and terms and conditions.

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held quarterly, i.e., four per annum. Additional, ad-hoc meetings may be convened if required.
- 2.2 One meeting **must** be held each year, to consider and comply with the performance management requirements outlined in the Teachers Pay and Conditions document.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the People Committee is as follows:
- 3.1.1 Five (5) Trustees on the nomination of the Trustees in post with a view to the candidates providing relevant skills and experience
- 3.1.2 The Director of HR (or nominee) attends the meetings in an advisory capacity. The Chief Executive Officer would attend on an as needed basis.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, making recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- 4.2 To ensure compliance with the Teachers Pay and Conditions document, to the setting of teacher pay, making recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- 4.3 To act as the appeal body for the Trust's suite of HR policies.
- 4.4 To approve such policies as delegated to the committee by the Board of Trustees.

5 Remit and responsibilities

- 5.1 The powers and functions delegated by the Board to the People Committee are as set out below.

5.1.1 Pay

- 5.1.1.1 To receive from the CEO recommendations for the adoption by the Trust Board of:

- I. an appraisal/ performance management policy; and

II. a pay policy for the Trust and its academies

5.1.1.2 To operate in accordance with the statutory appraisal regulations and the relevant Trust's adopted policy as follows:

- I. undertaking the appraisal of the CEO;
- II. agreeing objectives and reviewing the CEO's performance;
- III. to determine whether the outcome of the CEO's appraisal meets the criteria for pay progression;
- IV. to support the CEO with the annual report to the Board on appraisal arrangements and outcomes for all other staff;
- V. to convene a panel selected from the Board to hear any appeal by a teacher against entries made within their appraisal statement.

5.1.1.3 To moderate pay decisions across the Academies.

5.1.1.4 A panel selected from the committee to hear any appeal by a teacher employed at any academy against the outcome of their threshold assessment application.

5.1.1.5 To determine annually, in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document the Appraisal and Pay Policies adopted by the Trust.

5.1.1.6 To deal with any other matters relating to pay, appraisal and employment as may be referred by the Board.

5.1.2 Grievances

5.1.2.1 To consider staff grievances where there is a referral under the grievance procedure adopted by the Board. A panel comprised of members of the committee will consider the grievance and seek to resolve the matter following a process and hearing conducted in accordance with the adopted procedure.

5.1.2.2 To consider staff complaints of harassment where there is a referral to the committee under the procedure adopted by the Board. The committee will consider the complaint and seek to resolve the matter following a process and hearing conducted in accordance with the adopted policy.

5.13 Staff discipline and dismissals

5.1.3.1 Under the disciplinary or capability procedures adopted by the Trust Board, to consider any required formal action, and for a panel comprised of members of the committee to make a determination as provided for under either procedure. The committee will be responsible for the future review of any sanction short of dismissal as required under the relevant procedure.

- 5.1.3.2 Under the disciplinary or other relevant procedures (e.g., relating to capability, staff reductions or incapability due to ill-health) adopted by the Board, to make any determination that any member of staff employed at an academy should be dismissed from their post.
- 5.1.3.3 Before taking a decision on dismissal, to give the member of staff concerned an opportunity to make representations on the proposed action and to consider those representations at a formal meeting conducted in accordance with the relevant adopted procedure.
- 5.1.3.4 Where it is determined that a member of staff should be dismissed, to ensure that the member of staff is notified of the decision, the reason for it and that the member of staff has a right of appeal against the decision.

5.1.4 Staff appeals

- 5.1.4.1 Under the disciplinary procedure or capability procedure adopted by the Board, to consider any appeal against a sanction short of dismissal issued by the CEO, Principal or by the staff discipline/ dismissal committee to a member of staff employed at the Trust.
- 5.1.4.2 Under the disciplinary or other relevant procedures (e.g., relating to capability, redundancy, or incapability due to ill health) adopted by the Board, to consider any appeal against a decision of the staff discipline/ dismissal committee to dismiss from their post a member of staff employed at the academy.
- 5.1.4.3 To consider appeals under other procedures as may from time to time be delegated by the Trust Board, including appeals under the Trust's adopted Pay Policy.

5.1.5 Human Resources policy development

- 5.1.5.1 To receive reports and make recommendations to the Board on all aspects of matters relating to staff at the Trust.
- 5.1.5.2 To advise on the strategic planning of human resources.
- 5.1.5.3 To monitor the communication and consultation of policies and processes to staff and review feedback.
- 5.1.5.4 To advise on the means of achieving active participation by staff in policy development.
- 5.1.5.5 To advise and recommend revisions to those policies which affect staff, including but not limited to those which relate to recruitment, retention, record-keeping, induction, training, allegations against staff, equalities, discipline and grievance, professional conduct, professional development, charging and remissions, training, performance management, management of stress, trade unions, whistle-blowing and pay.

- 5.1.5.6 To ensure compliance with the legal requirements for Early Career Teacher (ECT) induction.
- 5.1.5.7 To carry out a review of the staffing establishment in relation to the staffing element of the Trust development plan and growth strategy.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Curriculum and Standards Committee

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Curriculum and Standards Committee is responsible for the executive oversight, governance, and validation of the Trust's responsibilities to the Secretary of State as outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook
- 1.2 The Curriculum and Standards Committee has high level responsibility and oversight of the curriculum framework relating to educational performance, quality and standards, and pupil welfare.

2 Frequency of meetings

- 2.1 Meetings shall be held quarterly, i.e., four per annum. Additional, ad-hoc meetings may be convened if required.

3 Membership and constitution

- 3.1 The composition of the Curriculum and Standards Committee is as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Five (5) Trustees normally appointed by the Members on the nomination of the Trustees in post with a view to the candidates providing particular skills and experience relevant to the running of the Trust and Company.
 - 3.1.2 The Chief Executive Officer, and the Executive Director of Curriculum and Performance, or the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, and Communications, may attend meetings in an advisory capacity.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 To ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook
- 4.2 To acknowledge all correspondence from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), ensure it is brought to the attention of the Trust Board, and respond within the timelines required by the ESFA to secure compliance and effective curriculum and standards.
- 4.3 To assure effective governance in all trust operations and development plans and strategies regarding curriculum and standards.
- 4.4 To approve such policies as delegated to the committee by the Board of Trustees.

5 Remit and responsibilities

- 5.1 The powers and functions delegated by the Board to the Curriculum and Standards Committee are as set out below.

5.1.1 Teaching and learning

5.1.1.1 Reviewing and evaluating teaching and learning; pupils' standards and progress; and teachers' CPD, taking account of the performance of the full range of different groups represented in the Trust's academies, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, looked after children and pupils in different ethnic, social and ability groups.

5.1.2 Self-evaluation

5.1.2.1 Keeping under review the academies' self-evaluation process, and detail of the completed self-evaluation forms (SEF).

5.1.3 Policy development

5.1.3.1 Maintaining and reviewing statutory curriculum and standards policies, e.g., relationships and sex education policy; behaviour and attendance policies; anti-bullying policies; safeguarding and child protection policies, amongst others.

5.1.4 Educational performance

5.1.4.1 Receiving reports on the monitoring of the performance of pupils and to carry out the Trust's responsibilities for the provision of assessment and other curriculum-related statistics and information, including attendance, and pupil exclusions and suspensions

5.1.5 Strategic planning

5.1.5.1 The committee will review and monitor the CEO's plans including, but not limited to, the relevant sections of the MAT Corporate Development Plan, namely:

- I. Raising standards of attainment across all academies
- II. Ensuring successful engagement with the stakeholders of the communities served, including the student voice
- III. Intervention in academies where required
- IV. Setting of attainment, targets, and value-added measures
- V. Monitoring of actions from Ofsted reports
- VI. Management of student attendance
- VII. Management of student behaviour

Appendix B – Delegated duties and authorities

DELEGATED DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES 2024/25

The delegated duties below outline the responsibilities and decisions that the Board of Trustees has agreed to delegate. Although decisions may be delegated, the Board of Trustees, as a whole, remains responsible for any decision made under delegation. The Trustees may delegate decisions to committees of the Board, as outlined in the relevant committee Terms of Reference.

Delegated duty	Ref. #	Task(s)/ functions	Delegated authority	Comment(s)
Student support and wellbeing				
Admissions	1	To determine and implement an admissions policy, and consult as appropriate	Board of Trustees	
	2	Admissions: application decisions	Principal	
Alternative provision	3	Ensure appropriate alternative education is provided for those students requiring support	Principal	The length of time a pupil spends in another mainstream school or Alternative Provision and the reintegration plan must be kept under review by the Academy Advisory Group.
Behaviour, discipline and exclusions	4	To establish a pupil discipline policy	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Approved by the Board
	5	To review the use of exclusion and to decide whether or not to confirm all permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where the pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in total in a term or would lose the opportunity to sit a public examination. (Can be delegated to chair/vice-chair in cases of urgency)	Academy Advisory Group	
	6	To convene panels to provide support to consideration of behaviour management, exclusions and suspensions	Academy Advisory Group	The AAGs may draw on support from members of other AAGs and Trustees
	7	To direct reinstatement of excluded pupils (Can be delegated to chair/vice-chair in cases of urgency)	Academy Advisory Group	Can be executed by the chair or vice-chair in cases of urgency

Delegated duty	Ref. #	Task(s)/ functions	Delegated authority	Comment(s)
Safeguarding	8	Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are in place across the Trust and implemented	Curriculum and Standards Committee	
	9	Ensure each AAG appoints a safeguarding representative	Board of Trustees	
	10	Monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures, providing regular reports and updates	Academy Advisory Group	
	11	Ensure the implementation and adherence of safer recruitment procedures	People Committee	
Financial management				
Budgets	12	To approve the first formal budget plan each financial year	Board of Trustees	Finance and Premises Committee to determine the budget and submit a recommendation for Board approval
	13	Regular monitoring of the individual academy budget position within the MAT	Finance and Premises Committee	
	14	To monitor monthly expenditure	Finance and Premises Committee	
	15	To determine and implement a charging and remissions policy	Finance and Premises Committee	
	16	To enter into business contracts and approve payments as per financial authorisation levels confirmed in the Trust's financial regulations:		
		Up to £1,000	Individual budget holder	
		£1,001 to £5,000	Individual budget holder and Finance Manager	
		£5,001 to £20,000	Individual budget holder and Director of Finance	
		£20,001 to £100,000	Individual budget holder and Chief Operating Officer	
		£100,001 and above	Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees	

Delegated duty	Ref. #	Task(s)/ functions	Delegated authority	Comment(s)
Estates and Facilities management				
Estate management	17	Buildings insurance and personal liability	Chief Operating Officer	
	18	Developing school buildings strategy or master plan	Chief Operating Officer	
	19	Procuring and maintaining buildings, including developing properly funded maintenance plan	Chief Operating Officer	
Health and safety	20	To determine and implement a health and safety policy	Chief Operating Officer	
Human Resources				
Staff appointments	21	Chief Executive Officer appointment (selection panel)	Board of Trustees	
	22	Executive Director and Principal appointments (selection panel)	Board of Trustees	
	23	Appoint teachers at academy Senior Leadership level	Academy Advisory Group	
	24	Appoint teachers below academy Senior Leadership level	Principal	
	25	Appoint academy support staff below Chief Officer grade	Principal	
	26	Appoint MAT support staff at Chief Officer Grade	Chief Operating Officer	
	27	Appoint MAT support staff (MAT) below Chief Officer grade	Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director, or their nominated recruiting manager	
Staff pay	28	Pay discretions for Executive Directors and Principals	Board of Trustees	On the recommendation of the People Committee
	29	Determine the Trust pay policy	People Committee	Approved by the Board
	30	Pay discretions for teaching and non-teaching staff	People Committee	Approved by the Board
Staff management	31	Establishing disciplinary and capability procedures	People Committee	Approved by the Board
	32	Dismissal or suspension (start and end) of Chief Executive Officer	Board of Trustees	
	33	Dismissal or suspension (start and end) of Executive Directors and Principals	Board of Trustees	
	34	Dismissal or suspension (start and end) of other staff (delegated as appropriate to the circumstances)	Chief Operating Officer or Executive Director	
	35	Determining staff structures (teaching and non-teaching)	Chief Executive Officer	Approved by the Board

Delegated duty	Ref. #	Task(s)/ functions	Delegated authority	Comment(s)
Staff management (continued)	36	Determining settlement payments or early retirement of CEO and Executive team	Board of Trustees	
	37	Determining settlement payments or early retirement of all other staff	Chief Executive Officer	
	38	To determine and implement a performance management policy	People Committee	Approved by the Board
	39	To review annually the performance management policy	People Committee	Approved by the Board
Curriculum and pupil performance				
Curriculum and standards	40	Ensure National Curriculum (NC) taught to all pupils and to consider any disapplication for pupil(s)	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Approved by the Board
	41	To determine and implement a curriculum policy	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Approved by the Board
	42	Responsible for standards of teaching	Curriculum and Standards Committee	
	43	To decide which subject options should be taught having regard to resources, and implement provision for flexibility in the curriculum (including activities outside school day)	Principal	
	44	Responsibility for individual child's education	Principal	
	45	Provision of sex education – to establish and keep up to date a written policy	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Approved by the Board
	46	To prohibit political indoctrination and ensuring the balanced treatment of political issues	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Approved by the Board
	47	To prepare and publish the school prospectus	Principal	
	48	To set and publish targets for pupil achievement	Principal	
Extended Schools	49	To determine any offer of additional activities and then ensure delivery of provision	Principal	
Organisational compliance				
School category	50	To publish proposals to change category of school	Board of Trustees	
School day	51	To set the times of school sessions and the dates of school terms and holidays	Principal	
	52	To ensure that the school meets for 380 sessions in a school year	Principal	

Delegated duty	Ref. #	Task(s)/ functions	Delegated authority	Comment(s)
School meals	53	To ensure that school lunch nutritional standards are met	Principal	
	54	To ensure provision of free school meals to those pupils meeting the criteria	Principal	
Appeals (pupil discipline, staffing, admissions, complaints)	55	Any appeal hearings will be determined by a panel of Trustees and/ or Academy Advisors (panel constituted as appropriate) who were not involved in the original decision-making process	Board of Trustees	
Delegated Executive Powers	56	In special circumstances Trustees can give delegated powers to the Chair of Trustees, CEO and one relevant Executive team member.	Board of Trustees	This action can be approved by Trustees via email for urgent matters
Policies	57	To approve the Trust's policies or agree the delegations of such policies	Board of Trustees	



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role title:	Member
Location:	Meetings of the Board of Members are held at the Trust's registered company address at Gosforth Academy, or at any of the other academies within the Trust.
Salary:	Voluntary

Main purpose of the job

Members are the equivalent to shareholders in a commercial company and their role is to assess whether the Board of Trustees is performing well, and that the purpose of the Trust and its charitable objects are being fulfilled.

Main duties and key responsibilities

- holding Trustees to account in relation to the Trust's ethos and values, and governance across the Trust
- ensuring the success of the Trust; ensuring its key charitable objective of advancing education for public benefit is achieved; and ensuring the Trust spends public money wisely
- monitoring the effectiveness of Trustees and the Trust's governance arrangements
- amending and signing the Articles of Association when required, subject to the agreement of the Department for Education
- appointing and removing the external auditors
- receiving the Trust's annual audited accounts and Annual Report
- appointing and removing Members
- changing the name of the charitable company the Trust operates under
- calling an annual general meeting and other general meetings as required
- dissolving the Trust, if required
- adherence to the Gosforth Group Governance Code of Conduct
- perform the role of Member whilst upholding the seven principles of public life that apply to all individuals elected or appointed to public office, or to work in, all sectors that provide public services: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Member



PERSONAL QUALITIES
Commitment to a voluntary role
Commitment to the ethos and values of Gosforth Group
Commitment to the education and welfare of children and young people
Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity
Ability to scrutinise and evaluate whether the Trust is abiding by its charitable objects
Ability to make difficult decisions where necessary
Ability to work within a formal governance structure
Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a Member
Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders, e.g., parents, staff, and pupils
Respect for the work and views of other Members, Trustees, and staff
Willingness to make and stand by collective decisions, even if offering an alternative view during discussions
Ability to work as a team
APTITUDE AND SKILLS
Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a Member
Understanding and capacity to critique the performance of the Board of Trustees in meeting its three core functions of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of its staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
Ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the Trust in a constructive manner and in the best interests of the Trust
Ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence, including financial reports
Capacity to query and critique, and ask for evidence upon which to base considered judgements
Functional IT skills, including Microsoft Office and experience of, or willingness to learn how to use remote meeting software and online governance tools to access agenda, papers and minutes of meetings

ROLE DESCRIPTION



Role title:	Chair (Vice-Chair) of the Board of Trustees
Location:	Meetings of the Board of Trustees are held at the Trust's registered company address at Gosforth Academy, or at any of the other academies within the Trust.
Salary:	Voluntary

Main purpose of the job

The Chair provides leadership and direction to the board of trustees and enables the board to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the trust. The Chair ensures that the trust pursues its objects as defined in the articles of association, charity law, company law and other relevant legislation.

Main duties and key responsibilities

Principal responsibilities

- provide leadership to the trust board and ensure that trustees work effectively together and fulfil their functions for the proper governance of the trust and act in line with the requirements of the articles of association.
- ensure that all Board Members perform their role whilst upholding the seven principles of public life that apply to all individuals elected or appointed to public office, or to work in, all sectors that provide public services: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- ensure adherence to the Gosforth Group Governance Code of Conduct
- ensure the board sets a clear vision and strategy for the trust which identifies strategic priorities and maintains strategic oversight of these priorities.
- ensure that the trust board and executive team have a shared sense of purpose.
- ensure appropriate trustee involvement in the recruitment of the chief executive and schools' leadership.
- to ensure all trustees concentrate on their strategic role, receive information fit for purpose and hold the key post holders to account.
- ensure that the board has a clear grasp of the trust's financial position and to ensure financial transparency.

- ensuring trust accountability to external government agencies such as the Department for Education and ensuring the Education and Skills Funding Agency is informed if any irregularity is suspected.
- promote the best interests and be an advocate for the trust and where required, represent the trust board in its dealings with external partners.
- ensure that complaints made to the trust board are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
- ensure the board has the required skills to govern well, and that appointments made fill any identified skills gaps.
- ensure members of the board act reasonably and in line with the board's agreed code of conduct.
- develop a good working relationship with the vice-chair, ensuring s/he is kept fully informed to deputise as appropriate and delegating tasks as appropriate.
- consult with the CEO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and HR and oversee the CEO's activities in the context of the implementation of the board's strategy and policies.
- ensure that there is a plan for succession for the chair, vice-chair and any committee chairs, encourage team working among board members and that equality and diversity are considered in relation to recruitment to the board.
- act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.
- ensure adherence and compliance around key policies e.g., equalities, health & safety and in all decisions of the board and its sub-committees.
- promote critical self-assessment of trust governance performance and processes and continual improvement.
- assess the performance of the CEO and the company secretary to the trust

Monitoring and evaluating trust performance

- ensure the board is involved at a strategic level in the school's self-evaluation process and that this feeds into the key strategic priorities.
- ensure the board's business is focussed on the key strategic priorities and that performance indicators are established against which performance is measured.
- take the lead in representing the trust at relevant external meetings with agencies such as Ofsted, the Department for Education and the local authority.
- with the clerk and chief executive, plan for board meetings, agree agenda ensuring that the focus is on the board's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and agree draft minutes of these meetings.
- chair meetings effectively and promote an open culture on the trust board that allows ideas and discussion to thrive whilst ensuring clear decisions and robust and sound evaluations of trust performance are reached.
- create a strong, profitable, and fulfilling working relationship with trustees and the chief executive through review and self-reflective evaluation of contributions and effectiveness of the board.
- ensure that processes for decision making are transparent, rigorous and decisions taken at the meetings of the trust board are implemented.
- collaborate with the clerk to establish effective working procedures and sound committee structures and ensure that business at committees of the trust is reported appropriately.

Vice-Chair

The role of the Vice-Chair is to support the Chair by undertaking specific responsibilities as may be agreed with the Chair from time to time and to act in the Chair's absence. This is more than stepping in to chair occasional meetings, but to maintain a strategic overview and be prepared to lead with authority on key issues when the Chair is not present. It is therefore important that the Chair and Vice-Chair establish and maintain a good working relationship to ensure that sufficient knowledge is maintained.

The Vice-Chair is to be considered and developed as a possible future Chair.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Chair (Vice-Chair) of the Board of Trustees



PERSONAL QUALITIES
Commitment to a voluntary role
Commitment to the ethos and values of Gosforth Group
Commitment to the education and welfare of children and young people
Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity
Ability to scrutinise and evaluate whether the Trust is abiding by its charitable objects
Ability to make difficult decisions where necessary
Ability to work within a formal governance structure
Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee
Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders, e.g., parents, staff, and pupils
Respect for the work and views of other Trustees, Academy Advisors, Members, and staff
Willingness to make and stand by collective decisions, even if offering an alternative view during discussions
Ability to work as a team
APTITUDE AND SKILLS
Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of being a Trustee
Understanding and capacity to self-evaluate the performance of the Board of Trustees in meeting its three core functions of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of its staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
Ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the Trust in a constructive manner and in the best interests of the Trust
Ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence, including financial reports
Capacity to query and critique, and ask for evidence upon which to base considered judgements
Functional IT skills, including Microsoft Office and experience of, or willingness to learn how to use remote meeting software and online governance tools to access agenda, papers, and minutes of meetings
Leadership skills, including chairing meetings at board level, and experience of leading organisations through periods of change
Strategic and forward-looking vision in relation to the trust's objects and aims

Independent judgement, political impartiality and an understanding of the organisation and external environments of the Trust



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role title: Trustee

Location: Meetings of the Board of Trustees are held at the Trust's registered company address at Gosforth Academy, or at any of the other academies within the Trust.

Salary: Voluntary

Main purpose of the job

Trustees are subject to the duties and responsibilities of charitable trustees and company directors as well as any other conditions that the Secretary of State agrees with them.

Trustees must advance education, for the public benefit and to take ultimate responsibility for the trust's resources; the employment of staff, land and building matters and academy finances and funds.

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement, and the Academy Trust Handbook.

The Board of Trustees should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the executive to account for the educational performance of the academies and outcomes for learners, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the trust and assuring value for money.

Trustees also have statutory duties as company directors under the Companies Act, which comprise the duties to:

- Act within their powers;
- Promote the success of the company;
- Exercise independent judgment;
- Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Not to accept benefits from third parties; and

- Declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements, including any changes in circumstances, or changes to interests in trust business.

Main duties and key responsibilities

The strategic responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees works with the Chief Executive Officer, senior executive leaders and academy Principals who are responsible for day-to-day operational management of the school.

The role of the Board of Trustees is strategic and as such, trustees are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values, and long-term ambitious vision for the trust
- deciding the principles that guide trust policies
- considering strategic and operational policies for their approval
- appointing and appraising the CEO and making pay recommendations
- working with the CEO, senior executive leaders and academy Principals to develop a strategy for achieving the trust's vision
- determining the overarching strategic plan of the trust
- ensuring that stakeholders are involved, consulted, and informed
- ensuring that the trust delivers a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- taking ownership of the trust's financial sustainability and ensuring effective resource management
- approving the trust's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure that it supports the strategic objectives
- ensuring that a robust risk management policy and risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective
- developing effective links within the trust's community, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that academies meet their responsibilities to the community and serve the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of their pupils
- adherence to the Gosforth Group Governance Code of Conduct
- performing the role of Trustee whilst upholding the seven principles of public life that apply to all individuals elected or appointed to public office, or to work in, all sectors that provide public services: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership

Monitoring and evaluating trust performance

Trustees must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure that progress is being made in achieving them. Trustees do this by:

- measuring the trust's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and that the trust is operating effectively in line with these policies

- holding the CEO to account for standards, for financial probity and for compliance with policies
- evaluating data and feedback provided by senior executive leaders and by external sources on all aspects of trust/ school performance
- provide challenge and support to senior leaders, including the CEO
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints and whistleblowing effectively.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Trustee



PERSONAL QUALITIES
Commitment to a voluntary role
Commitment to the ethos and values of Gosforth Group
Commitment to the education and welfare of children and young people
Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity
Ability to scrutinise and evaluate whether the Trust is abiding by its charitable objects
Ability to make difficult decisions where necessary
Ability to work within a formal governance structure
Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee
Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders, e.g., parents, staff, and pupils
Respect for the work and views of other Trustees, Academy Advisors, Members, and staff
Willingness to make and stand by collective decisions, even if offering an alternative view during discussions
Ability to work as a team
APTITUDE AND SKILLS
Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of being a Trustee
Understanding and capacity to self-evaluate the performance of the Board of Trustees in meeting its three core functions of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of its staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
Ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the Trust in a constructive manner and in the best interests of the Trust
Ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence, including financial reports
Capacity to query and critique, and ask for evidence upon which to base considered judgements
Functional IT skills, including Microsoft Office and experience of, or willingness to learn how to use remote meeting software and online governance tools to access agenda, papers, and minutes of meetings

ROLE DESCRIPTION



Role title: Academy Advisor

Location: Meetings of the Academy Advisory Group are held at the academy which the advisory group serves, or at any of the other academies within the Trust.

Salary: Voluntary

Main purpose of the job

As part of Gosforth Group multi-academy trust, the Academy Advisory Group is a committee of the Board of Trustees. The Academy Advisory Group acts within the scheme of delegated authority and terms of reference, which outline its responsibilities.

The role of an Academy Advisor is to contribute to the work of the AAG and Trust in raising the standards of achievement for all pupils. This involves supporting the strategic development plan of the academy, acting as a critical friend to ensure accountability by undertaking linked responsibilities for quality assurance activities within the academy.

Main duties and key responsibilities

[The strategic responsibilities of the Academy Advisory Board](#)

Academy Advisory Boards hold responsibilities:

- to pupils, parents and the wider school and local community
- as a committee of the Board of Trustees, to the Gosforth Group Board of Trustees, via the Chair of the AAG
- to HM government, funding bodies and public for the use of public funds.

[Monitoring and evaluating academy performance](#)

Academy Advisors must work as part of the AAG to undertake the following responsibilities:

- to ensure that the activities of the AAG are undertaken within the vision and direction for the academy as set by the Board. Ensuring that AAG activities support the school and considers student needs and prepares learners for progression into mainstream education, further/higher education and/or apprenticeships/employment

- to positively support and assist in the school's quality assurance activities through appropriate questioning and enquiry and report within Board agreed protocols on outcomes of this involvement.
- to undertake AAG link roles that assist in the decision making of the Board and include responsibilities for, e.g., safeguarding, SEND, Pupil Premium, Children in Care, personal development (including careers provision), curriculum, achievement, leadership and management, reading and literacy, homework and STEM, Aim Higher, and Young Carers
- to liaise with leadership on the development of strategies and their review to enhance effective and regular engagement with stakeholders including the voice of parents, students, the local community, and staff, and to report on outcomes of these activities to assist decision making by the Board.
- through link roles and quality assurance activities, to review implementation and compliance to statutory required policies and operational policies, as set by the Board
- to develop the academy Admissions Policy for approval by the Board and to assist with student admission appeal process as required.
- to be involved in AAG pupil discipline, review, exclusion and complaints panels and commit to the undertaking of necessary training to effectively undertake these activities
- to receive student progress and attainment data
- to review and challenge academy improvement and action plans to support Pupil progress.
- to note the approved budget and risk register information for contextual awareness for AAG activities
- to be involved in annual AAG review of its own effectiveness and against its Terms of Reference on an annual basis
- to work with the Board of Trustees to ensure that all Academy Advisors receive appropriate training, are developed to fulfil their role within the AAG and undertake an annual AAG skills audit review.
- adherence to the Gosforth Group Governance Code of Conduct
- performing the role of Academy Advisor whilst upholding the seven principles of public life that apply to all individuals elected or appointed to public office, or to work in, all sectors that provide public services: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Academy Advisor



PERSONAL QUALITIES
Commitment to a voluntary role
Commitment to the ethos and values of Gosforth Group
Commitment to the education and welfare of children and young people
Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity
Ability to scrutinise and evaluate whether the Trust is abiding by its charitable objects
Ability to make difficult decisions where necessary
Ability to work within a formal governance structure
Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of an Academy Advisor
Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders, e.g., parents, staff, and pupils
Respect for the work and views of other Academy Advisors, Trustees, Members, and staff
Willingness to make and stand by collective decisions, even if offering an alternative view during discussions
Ability to work as a team
APTITUDE AND SKILLS
Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of being an Academy Advisor
Understanding and capacity to self-evaluate the performance of the Academy Advisory Group to support the Board of Trustees in meeting its three core functions of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of its staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
Ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the Academy in a constructive manner and in the best interests of the Trust
Ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence, including financial reports
Capacity to query and critique, and ask for evidence upon which to base considered judgements
Functional IT skills, including Microsoft Office and experience of, or willingness to learn how to use remote meeting software and online governance tools to access agenda, papers, and minutes of meetings