



**Wessex**

Learning Trust

We Learn Together

**Scheme of Governance  
2025-26**



## Wessex Learning Trust Scheme of Governance

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This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees annually



Signature:

Name: Mr Gavin Ball

Date: 12/11/2025

Position: Chief Executive



Signature:

Name: Mr Paul Jacobs

Date: 12/11/2025

Position: Chair of the Board

**Date approved by Trust Board: November 2025**

**Review Date: November 2026**

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# Part 1. Governance Structure

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Scheme

This Scheme of Governance (Scheme) has been drawn up by the Trustees of Wessex Learning Trust (the Trust) to set out an overarching framework under which the Trust is governed and managed, and in particular how:

- individuals involved in the governance of the Trust work effectively together.
- Members, Trustees, Partners (Local Partnership Boards - LPBs), Chief Executive/Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Executive Headteachers/Headteachers/Heads of School relate to each other in the structure.
- Trustees, in particular, maintain Trust-wide responsibility and ensure compliance with the numerous requirements placed on them.

This Scheme is reviewed and approved annually and in doing so, the Trustees have regard to any new legislation or change in policy affecting the provision of these documents.

This Scheme may be altered, added to or repealed by a majority resolution of the Trustees or by the Members of the Trust at a general meeting.

A copy of this Scheme shall be given to the Members of the Trust, every Trustee, each Local Partner, the Executive Leadership Team, the Executive Heads/Headteachers/Heads of School, and the Clerks as soon after the Trust Board's review and approval as possible.

### 1.2 Wessex Learning Trust – a Multi-Academy Trust (a 'Schools Trust')

The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee with exempt charitable status. Its constitution is its Articles of Association (the Articles).

It is not a loose federation of schools but a dynamic, collaborative and outward-looking organisation aiming to do its best for children/young people, staff and local communities.

The "Objects" of Wessex Learning Trust (the purposes it exists to further) are, according to its Articles:

(a) "to advance, for the public benefit, education in the United Kingdom in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing academies which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and which shall include:

- Academies other than those designated Church of England...
- Church of England academies designated as such...

(b) to provide facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation for the public at large in the interests of social welfare..."

The Trust current composition of schools can be found on the Wessex Learning Trust website.

Kings Fitness and Leisure is a wholly owned subsidiary business of the Trust. It has a Management Committee which is accountable to the Trust Board's Finance and Business Services Committee (FBS). An annual meeting is to take place whereby Kings Fitness and Leisure Centre's strategic plan is presented to the FBS. Whilst the delegation structure and day-to-day management of the business sits outside this document

the financial limits of the Trust are applicable to Kings Fitness and Leisure.

The Trust expects further schools to join it in the future.

The Trust has entered into a master funding agreement and separate supplemental funding agreements for each school with the Secretary of State for Education (**Funding Agreement**).

The Funding Agreement places several requirements on the Trust including the need to comply with the Department for Education's (DfE) Academy Trusts Handbook (**the Handbook**).

There are a number of people involved in the running of any multi-academy trust:

- Members & Trustees
- Chief Executive/Executive Leadership Team
- Partners (LPBs)
- Executive Heads/Headteachers/Heads of School

### 1.3 Religious Character Designation: Christian Distinctiveness

Where a school is designated with a Church of England or/and Methodist character, it is conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England or/and Methodist Church, both generally and in relation particularly to making arrangements for religious education and daily acts of worship.

The Trust Board's Values and Ethos Committee oversees the Wessex strategy and quality assurance including its Christian Distinctiveness, values and practices. Where schools are not of a particular religious character, the Trust Board does not apply its Christian Distinctiveness strategy, but it will quality assure the ethos and values of that school ensuring that they meet Wessex expectations. The Committee does support Christian work across all schools, where it is requested and agreed.

However, it is strongly noted that Wessex supports all faiths, religions, cultures and beliefs, promoting awareness, understanding, tolerance and celebration.

### 1.4 Vision and values

The vision of the Trust is driven by its ambition to provide high quality education and personal development for all children/young people regardless of background or ability. It believes in giving opportunities to staff and developing a growth mind-set around distributive leadership. Hope, belief and aspiration are woven into what the Trust sets out to do – a vision that aims to inspire and unite all schools in the Trust.

This means:

- Holistic and imaginative approaches to developing the whole child/young person
- Outstanding academic and personal development outcomes for all children/young people
- Exceptional business and community support providing fresh insight and guidance
- Commitment to shared values and helping schools thrive at the heart of their communities

This implies:

- Staff, learners and schools have teaching, learning, effective curriculum design and assessment as their top strategic priorities.

- Care systems, in partnership with parents and external agencies, are geared to influencing resilient and respectful behaviour.
- Central services are designed to reduce costs and maximise benefits for staff, learners and schools.
- The Trust is committed to collaboration between staff and key stages irrespective of phases and tiers.

The Trust is guided by its values that provide an overarching framework in which the culture of individual schools can also be expressed. The core values of the Trust are:

- Everyone Matters
- Working Together
- Making a Difference

## 1.5 Growth Strategy

The Regional Office has officially invited the Trust to grow. The rationale for further growth is as follows:

- Increase opportunities for local collaboration and accountability that will identify best practice, raise standards and improve efficiency within the Trust
- Establish one or more additional hubs of schools beyond the Cheddar Valley that will bring diversity and fresh approaches to the Trust
- Develop links with local and out-of-area school trusts to facilitate benchmarking, conduct reviews and ensure further progress throughout the Wessex Learning Trust

The Trust intends to establish area-based clusters / hubs; Trust schools in defined geographical proximity areas (e.g. around current community learning partnerships) which will be led, managed and governed both “jointly and severally” by the Trust Board in due course.

## 1.6 Trust Governance

The Scheme of Governance relates to the [Academy Trust Governance Guide \(March 2024\)](#) which states that in trusts, the purpose of governance is to provide:

- strategic leadership
- accountability and assurance
- strategic engagement

The Trust Board has collective accountability and strategic responsibility for the Trust. It has a focus on ensuring the Trust delivers an excellent education to pupils while maintaining effective financial management and must ensure compliance with:

- the trust’s charitable objects
- regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements
- their funding agreement

The Trust Board also has:

- strategic and statutory responsibility for safeguarding and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) arrangements within (and across) the academy trust ensuring the promotion of pupil welfare and for keeping their estates safe and well-maintained

- a role in making sure that it delivers its commitment to other schools and academies, however it is done

## 1.7 Governance structure

Wessex Learning Trust governance structure encompasses the following:

- **Members** – Our Trust Members have a limited but crucial role in ensuring the Trust’s effectiveness. Members appoint trustees and have the power to amend the Trust’s Articles of Association. They hold trustees to account for the Trust’s performance.
- **Trustees** – Our trustees are non-executive directors and are responsible for the overall strategic direction and oversight of the Trust. They ensure that the Trust complies with its charitable objectives, adheres to legal and financial regulations, and delivers high-quality inclusive education. Our trustees are volunteers and bring diverse skills and experiences to the Trust Board.
- **Executive Leadership** – Our Executive Leadership Team, led by the Chief Executive, is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust. Our executive leaders implement the strategic vision set by the trustees and manage the Trust’s operations, including educational performance and finance.
- **Local Partnership Boards** – Local Partnership Boards (LPBs) operate at school-level. They focus on improving the outcomes for children and young people in their schools, providing support and challenge to school leaders. Chairs of Local Partnership Boards meet regularly with the Chair of Trustees, ensuring a link between local and central governance.

The Trust Board delegates aspects of its responsibilities to committees that focus on specific areas, facilitated by trustees with expertise in those areas. The committees allow for more detailed scrutiny and specialized oversight, enabling the Trust Board to function more efficiently.

Wessex Learning Trust Board has the following committees:

- **Standards and School Improvement (SSI)**, responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education and student outcomes.
- **Audit and Risk (A&R)**, responsible for identifying and mitigating risks that could impact on the Trust’s operations and reputation.
- **Finance and Business Services (FBS)**, responsible for ensuring prudent financial management and accountability across the Trust, as well as Human Resources.
- **Values and Ethos (VE)**, advises the Trust Board on matters relating to the Trust’s overall position in respect of upholding and supporting its vision and values throughout the Trust.

In addition, the Chairs of Local Partnership Boards meet regularly with the Chair of Trustees, ensuring a link between local and central governance.

## 2. Members

### 2.1 Role of Members

In simple terms, Members “own” the Wessex Learning Trust. They have a number of statutory rights, including:

Members are entitled to be kept informed of Trust developments by the Trust Board so they can be assured

that the Board is exercising effective governance and leadership of their Trust. They must also ensure there are mechanisms available to Trustees and others involved in governance of the Trust (ie Local Partners) about how they can escalate concerns to Members, when issues are not being satisfactorily resolved by the Board themselves. Such mechanisms are also addressed in the Complaints and Whistleblowing policies.

Members are required to provide a guarantee that if the Trust was to be wound up and the assets did not meet all its liabilities, they would contribute £10 each.

Members' meetings (for Members only) are referred in the Articles to being 'general meetings'. There is a minimum of 2 meetings of Members per year on the understanding that additional meetings can be arranged.

## 2.2 Appointment of Members

Members are appointed in accordance with the Articles and therefore include someone nominated by the Bath & Wells Diocese (25% of the Members). There are four Members at any one time, including the Chair of Trustees. The other 3 members are neither Trustees nor Partners on LPBs unless exceptional circumstances prevail.

On appointment, all Members are required to complete a consent form, a DBS form and a business interests form. The Governance Professional updates the register of Members as appropriate and makes arrangements for the annual signing of the Wessex Learning Trust Code of Conduct (Partners, Trustees and Members). Due attention must be paid to avoid any potential conflict of interests.

## 2.3 Responsibilities of Members

The DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide (March 2024) states the following responsibilities for Members:

- To be signatories of the Articles of Association (if founding Members)
- To amend the Articles if needed
- To appoint and if required, to remove Trustees
- To pass a resolution to direct the Trustees to take specific action
- To appoint the auditors

# 3. Trustees

## 3.1 Role of Trustees

Each Trustee is legally known as a director of a company limited by guarantee as well as a charity trustee. Trustees meet as the Trust Board to carry out their duties and functions. Trustees may be neither Members (except the Chair) nor Partners on LPBs.

All Trustees are required to:

- Comply with the Articles and this Scheme of Governance including the Wessex Learning Trust's Code of Conduct (Partners, Trustees and Members).
- Ensure they understand their duties, rights and responsibilities.
- Refrain from misusing information gained during their Trusteeship for personal gain, nor seek to use the opportunity of service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses or other organisations.

- Participate actively in the induction process and any relevant training

## 3.2 Functions of Trustees

The role of the Trustees, acting collectively as a Trust Board, is threefold:

- To ensure clarity of the Trust's vision, values and strategy
- To hold the Chief Executive and ELT to account for the running of the Trust's schools, the performance of its staff and the progress/wellbeing of learners on roll
- To monitor the financial performance of the Trust and to be assured over its sustainable value for money

## 3.3 Duties of Trustees

The prime duty of Trustees is the governance of the Trust including its committees, LPBs and Executive Leadership Team. There is a fundamental need for clarity between broadly strategic and strictly operational issues and between the executive and non-executive functions. There are areas of engagement expected of Trustees:

- Identifying, reviewing and asserting the vision, values and strategy of the Trust.
- Working in accordance with the Objects of the Trust (as set out in the Articles) and safeguarding its assets.
- Overseeing governance and leadership structures and processes deployed within the Trust.
- Delegating the day-to-day operation of the Trust and its schools to the Chief Executive, ELT, Executive Heads/Headteachers/Heads of School and LPBs (as set out in Delegation Matrix).
- Maintaining connections with a specific LPB by operating as a 'Link Trustee' and occasionally attending their meetings and /or by operating as a Link Trustee to a theme or action area (e.g. HR, Pre-School, Estates, IT, Inclusion).
- Ensuring professional communication and relationships are deployed with staff, other trustees and LPB Partners.
- Applying financial controls and protocols in accordance with governance guidelines in the Academy Trust Handbook.
- Monitoring Trust action, development and strategic plans to enable progress towards targets.
- Holding a risk register, in the light of discussions with the ELT, to minimise detrimental impact on the standards, people, estate and reputation of the Trust.
- Insisting the Trust is conducted in compliance with the general law.

## 3.4 Accountabilities of Trustees

The Trustees are accountable to a number of stakeholders:

- The beneficiaries of the Trust (learners, parents and the local communities) for the quality of education and pastoral care in their schools including matters of health, safety and safeguarding
- The Diocese of Bath and Wells, DfE, ESFA and specifically the Secretary of State re the Funding Agreements and compliance with charities legislation
- The employees of the Trust for their working environment and compliance with employment law, including health and safety and compliance with the Wessex People Strategy
- Regulatory authorities such as the Regional Office, Local Authorities, HSE, PHE, OFSTED, external auditors and other bodies to which the Trust is subject

### 3.5 Expectations of Trustees

The principal responsibility of the Trustees is to hold the Chief Executive and other members of the ELT to account. Trustees are expected to offer strategic support, constructive advice, an external opinion and impartial assistance as needed. Trustees are also expected to challenge proposals by asking non-executive questions, seeking further information and influencing outcomes in the best interests of the Trust.

The Trustees are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Sign annually the Wessex Code of Conduct (Partners, Trustees & Members)
- Act together and in person and not delegate the responsibility of the Trust to others
- Act strictly in accordance with the Articles
- Act in the interests of the Trust and without regard to their own private interests
- Manage the affairs of the Trust prudently
- Take no personal benefit from the Trust unless expressly authorised by the Articles or the Charities Commission
- Seek proper professional advice on Trust matters where they are not suitably competent

### 3.6 Appointment of Trustees

The Articles allow for 12 to 16 Trustees, including the Chair and the Chief Executive, to be appointed. The right is reserved to serve with less than the maximum so long as there is an appropriate mix of skills and attention paid to succession planning.

The Diocese of Bath & Wells currently nominates 25% of the Trust Board. A Trustee or Member may not be a Partner of a Wessex school. Only the Chair of the Trust Board may also be a Member.

On acceptance of a provisional offer of appointment, all Trustees are required to:

- Undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Complete a Trustee eligibility declaration
- Complete a declaration of business interests form

### 3.7 Recruitment of Trustees

The Trust Board aims to have an appropriate mix of knowledge and expertise, based on an annual audit of skills. New Trustees are recruited to meet the needs of the Trust and to plan for succession. Members appoint new Trustees in consultation with the Trust Board.

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- The skills of new Trustees fit with DfE's 'Competency Framework' and the short, medium and long-term requirements of the Trust Board
- All relevant checks, including an enhanced DBS check, are completed before the Trustee takes up position
- The new Trustee understands the legal responsibility of becoming a Trustee and consents to taking up the new position

New Trustees are entitled to receive, as a minimum, copies of the following documents: Wessex Learning Trust Articles, this Scheme of Governance (Parts 1, 2 & 3), Academy Trust Handbook, the previous Wessex

### 3.8 Chair of Trustees

The Trust Board annually elects a Chair and Vice Chair from among their number, provided they are not employees of the Trust. The terms and conditions of the Chair and Vice Chair are set out in the Articles.

The main role of the Chair is to provide leadership to the Trustees and to act as the key point of contact between The Trust Board and the Chief Executive. Apart from responsibility for chairing meetings of the Trust Board, the Chair may have special powers as outlined in the Articles (e.g. to have a second or casting vote in any case of a tie in a Trust Board vote). The Chair has no rights over any other Trustee unless there has been explicit delegation from the Trust Board (e.g. overspend in budget) as outlined in the Articles.

### 3.9 Meetings of Trustees

There are at least 3 meetings of the Trust Board per academic year. All meetings are conducted according to the Articles and may cover the following:

- A general report on the progress of learners in schools, educational trends, initiatives and action points of schools in the Trust
- An operations update including finance, people, estates and capital updates
- A report on any significant incidents, issues and contracts being considered by the ELT
- A discussion on strategic developments under consideration including the Wessex growth strategy

The Trust Board also meets in smaller numbers in committee for the purpose of holding more detailed discussion with members of the Executive Leadership Team. The committees are as follows, have their own terms of reference and are subject to annual review:

- Standards & School Improvement (SSI)
- Finance and Business Services (FBS)
- Audit and Risk (AR)
- Values and Ethos (VE)

### 3.10 Standards and School Improvement Committee (SSI)

SSI has delegated powers according to its terms of reference that are annually reviewed by the Trust Board. Data on attainment, progress, attendance, welfare, behaviour and other performance indicators is collected to secure a Trust-wide basis for consideration by this committee.

The case for school improvement is on-going and is in sharp focus when/if there are 'Schools at Risk' or subjects/ themes / areas at risk of under-performance within the Trust. There is a minimum of three SSI meetings a year.

The SSI committee run a number of sub-groups to allow deeper-dives into key areas:

- Pre-School Scrutiny panel
- Primary Scrutiny panel
- Secondary Scrutiny panel
- Inclusion Panel (Including SEND and Pupil Premium KPIs)
- Learner Welfare and Participation Action Group
- Employability Action Group

### 3.11 Finance and Business Services (FBS)

FBS has delegated powers according to its terms of reference that are annually reviewed by the Trust Board. With over 80% of the Trust revenue budget being spent on Trust employees, the Wessex People Strategy is a key part of the work of this committee. Central planning around recruitment, retention and succession is critical.

FBS will also examine possibilities of further centralisation and specialisation of business services to support schools and achieve best value.

The Committee will evaluate variation in budget and help set the overall Trust budget, driving budget assumptions for schools and setting the Central budget contribution for schools. All other school expenditure remains the responsibility of LPBs and Heads. There is a minimum of three FBS meetings a year.

The FBS committee run a number of sub-groups to drive action and impact in key areas:

- Estates and Capital Action Group
- Wessex People Strategy

### 3.12 Audit and Risk (AR)

AR has delegated powers according to its terms of reference that are annually reviewed by the Trust Board. AR will evaluate overall risk to the Trustees and the Trust (in all categories). During any period of uncertainty or extensive risk (such as pandemic) the AR will meet more often to review the risk, impact and mitigation, with the aim of schools continuing to deliver high quality learning in an assured, safe environment for learners and staff.

Audit of past actions and budgets, in all matters, is used as evidence to help inform future planning and changes in any strategy being considered by the Trust Board. There is a minimum of three calendared RSA meetings a year.

AR will run a number of sub-groups to drive action and impact in key areas:

- I.T. Strategy Action Group (including Cyber Security)
- Sustainability Action Group

### 3.13 Values and Ethos (VE)

Values and Ethos (VE), advises the Trust Board on matters relating to the Trust's overall position in respect of upholding and supporting its vision and values throughout the Trust.

## 4. Local Partnership Boards (LPBs)

### 4.1 Scope of LPBs

The Trust Board establishes an LPB and appoints a Chair in respect of each school within the Trust unless it is agreed with the relevant schools that there is to be a combination of two or more under the leadership of an Executive Head and therefore a combined LPB. LPBs are Trust Board Committees with delegated powers according to the Delegation Matrix and their terms of reference are annually reviewed.

The Delegation Matrix is a key document that outlines the tasks and relationships expected in governance

within the Trust. The role of the LPB of a school deemed to be 'good or better' in summary, is as follows:

- To uphold and demonstrate the vision and values of the Trust, focusing on the agreed priorities of the school(s), and leaving operational matters to the Executive Head/Headteacher in partnership with the Chief Executive and Wessex Executive Leadership Team
- To focus the school's leadership on developing learners and achieving great outcomes for young people
- To quality assure all aspects of the school's performance and key performance indicators, providing challenge and support alongside the Chief Executive and ELT / Central Team, assisting with holding the Executive Head / Headteacher to account
- To assist in pro-actively ensuring that the school will be good or better in inspection (Ofsted and SIAMS / church inspection if applicable)
- To assist in pro-actively ensuring that the school meets the Gatsby benchmarks (career / employability)
- To assist in pro-actively ensuring that the school is adequate with its safeguarding procedures
- To be the checks and balances that the school retains its uniqueness and community interaction
- To welcome Trustees, the Chief Executive and members of ELT to LPB meetings as appropriate
- To upload minutes of LPB meetings, in a standardised format, to the Chair of Trust Board and Chief Executive, within 2 weeks of the meeting
- To engage with implementation and application of Trust-wide policies, including curriculum, assessment, welfare, inclusion, relationships, complaints, finance
- To be a part of the wider Wessex family and to be proud of 'being Wessex'

LPBs of 'schools that are causing concern' may have amendments to their LPB membership and terms of reference according to their circumstances and requirements.

Where the performance of the school or certain aspects of the school is causing concern, the Chief Executive or members of the ELT will contact Partners and explain why there is a concern and what action has been triggered (the ELT and Central Team leaders review Heat Maps that rate aspects of a school's performance). Partners may be asked to intervene or monitor more closely / effectively.

If the LPB is deemed to be causing concern, the Trust Board may intervene through a range of responses including taking control of an LPB. The LPB is therefore expected to understand that intervention by the Board may be necessary in line with the Trust's policy for intervention in schools causing concern as set out in Part 3 Section 2.

## 4.2 Chairs of Local Partnership Boards Group (CoLPB)

Chairs of LPBs are invited to be members of this working group where there is an expectation of at least 3 meetings per year. The Chair of the Trust Board chairs the CoLPB Group, but it is not a Trust Board committee. Its purpose is to enable good communication between LPB Chairs, the Trust Board Chair and the Chief Executive/ELT. The main activities of CoLPB group are to receive updates on Trust-wide developments from the Chief Executive, share examples of best practice, represent individual LPB concerns and comment on future options.

The case for informal, as well as formal, communication between Trustees and Partners is also encouraged outside the schedule of CoLPB group and its meetings.

## 4.3 Appointment of Local Partners

Partners play a very important part in the governance of schools at a more finite, interactive and local level.

They are appointed by the LPB, on the basis of a skills audit and ratified by the Wessex Trust Board. The Trust Board reserves the right to remove a Partner if it feels that the Partner does either not adhere to the values and ethos of the Trust or is part of the diagnosed problem relating to school improvement.

Partners need to remain strategic, ensure that quality assurance is taking place and leave operational matters to the Executive Head/Headteacher/Head of School and the Wessex Central Team. Annually the skills audit of a LPB will be shared with the Trust Board.

Partners may not also serve as either Trustees or Members within the Trust and must annually sign the Wessex Code of Conduct (Partners, Trustees and Members). As outlined in section 4.1 above and following a similar pattern for Trustees in section 3, there is a parallel set of expectations, duties, functions and accountabilities but scaled back to the individual school(s). LPB terms of reference are also made available to those considering appointment as a Partner.

## 5. Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Wessex Central Team

### 5.1 Role of Chief Executive (CE)

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trust Board and provides professional leadership, strategic management and overall capacity for the Trust and its schools. He/she will tend not to be also an Executive Head/Headteacher unless exceptional circumstances apply.

He/she is a Trustee and must annually sign the Wessex Code of Conduct (Partners, Trustees and Members). The Chief Executive reports to the Trust Board and is expected to comply with any reasonable request or directive from the Trustees when acting on behalf of the Trust.

Whilst it is the Trustees who make a strategic contribution and have an accountability function, it is the Chief Executive who must be left to get on with the operational concerns of implementation and change.

He/she is responsible for:

- Organisation, management and improvement of progress and outcomes across the Trust schools
- Influencing and implementing the Trust vision, values and strategic framework
- Application of Trust policies and the balancing of risk and compliance with regulatory bodies
- Financial management, through the role of Accounting Officer, as detailed in the Handbook.

The Delegation Matrix is a key document outlining demarcation of responsibility between Trustees, Partners, Chief Executive, Executive Headteachers and Headteachers but the Trust Board may also delegate specific powers to enable the Chief Executive to carry out certain responsibilities.

### 5.2 Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

The Chief Executive is supported by a variety of post-holders according to need and budget considerations. The Executive Leadership Team is the senior body of the Central staff that act on behalf of the Chief Executive. A member of the ELT has the authority to act on behalf of the Chief Executive. With the size of the Trust, it is important to have the capacity and agility to move quickly. The Director of Primary / Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Operations are the two most senior posts aside the Chief Executive on ELT.

**The Director of Primary (DOP) / Deputy Chief Executive** reports directly to the Chief Executive and has

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responsibility to drive progress and learning across schools with Primary and Early Years learners. This post-holder line manages Headteachers / Executive Headteachers in First and Primary Schools and has authority to shape curriculum development and curriculum conversion as well as the authority to refine assessment and delivery methods across the entire sector. The post-holder also has authority to act on behalf of the Chief Executive, in any age range with any issue, with that post-holder's authority.

**The Director of Operations (DoO)** reports directly to the Chief Executive and maintains an overview of Trust's Business Support Services e.g. capital and revenue finance, premises, ICT, HR and others as agreed. This post-holder has the responsibility for driving efficiency and effectiveness of all operational functions and for achieving economies of scale with the growth of the Trust. The post-holder has the authority to 'centralise' any function and to direct any operational function that remains on location in a school to ensure maximum efficiency, consistency of (Trust) systems and compliance.

Other posts on the Executive Leadership Team are:

- Director of Secondary
- Director of People and Culture
- Director of Estates
- Director of Finance
- Director of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Safeguarding and Learner Welfare (Pastoral) Manager

Members of ELT, especially the Director of Primary/Deputy CEO and the Director of Operations expected to attend certain Trust committee and LPB meetings according to relevance and suitability.

### 5.3 Wessex Central Team (WCT)

The Wessex Central Team is a body of staff that performs two functions: support and challenge. The benefits of a schools' trust is that of economies of scale; financial and specialists. The Central Team performs and facilitates those economies of scale, which include:

- Professional Learning (Communities) and training for all schools, for all staff
- Subject specialists
- SEND specialists
- Welfare specialists
- Leadership training, coaching, supervision and quality assurance
- Curriculum development
- Assessment development
- Overall school improvement
- Sharing best practice
- Governance training
- Moderation
- Quality Assurance
- Succession planning
- Human Resource (HR) advice, guidance and intervention
- Policy development
- Finance support
- Joint procurement
- Legal support

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- Timetable support
- Estate and compliance support
- Admissions
- Administrative support

There are currently Wessex Central Team Leaders and Central staff in a number of areas, including I.T., SEND, inclusion, training and professional learning, timetabling, data and curriculum, pre-school, teacher-coaching, early careers teacher co-ordination, finance, HR, welfare as well as the ELT Managers listed above.

Wessex has a number of Wessex Lead Practitioners in a number of educational areas that have expertise and skill to share practice across the Trust.

As a Trust, the Central Team buys in bespoke expertise to help in specific areas of need, such as Modern Foreign Languages; Speech, Language and Communication; Leadership coaching; external School Improvement Advisors and so forth.

There is an emphasis on learning from best practice and ensuring improvement through a Trust-wide approach. Such post-holders would also be expected to attend certain Trust Board committee meetings as appropriate.

## 6. Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and Heads of Schools

### 6.1 Executive Headteachers

Executive Headteachers are Headteachers across more than one school and are judged against the National Headteacher Standards and the progress rates / outcomes for those schools. As with all appointments, they are appointed by the Trust and not the schools involved, after a selection process involving the Trustees, the Chief Executive and ELT, the LPB, and school staff as appropriate. They report to the Chief Executive / Deputy Chief Executive and are also accountable to their LPB. They are entitled to be members of the Trust Management Group (TMG chaired by the Chief Executive) – not a Trust Board Committee but a vital link in the two-way communication chain between senior leaders in the Trust. A minimum of 3 meetings per year is to be expected.

They have a bespoke job description related to the DfE document ‘national standards of excellence for Headteachers’ which sets out 4 domains:

- Qualities and Knowledge
- Pupils and Staff
- Systems and Processes
- Self-Improving School System

They are therefore accountable for the following:

- Strategic Leadership within the vision and values framework of the Trust
- Educational Excellence within the curriculum and assessment policies of the Trust
- Operational Management within the financial and administrative procedures of the Trust
- Development of external relationships within the inclusive and strategic context of the Trust

### 6.2 Headteachers

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Headteachers have responsibility for one school. As with all appointments, they are appointed by the Trust and not the individual school after a selection process involving the Trustees, the Chief Executive, the LPB, school staff and members of ELT as appropriate. They report to the Chief Executive and are accountable to their LPB. They are invited to be members of TMG as a means of ensuring essential two-way communication between senior leaders in the Trust. They have their own bespoke job description within the frameworks outlined above.

### 6.3 Heads of School

Heads of School share responsibility for one school and report to the Executive Headteacher. As with all appointments, they are appointed by the Trust after a selection process involving the Trustees, the Chief Executive, the Executive Headteacher, the LPB, school staff and members of ELT as appropriate. They have a bespoke job description based on negotiations with the Executive Head and LPB. They are not members of TMG since the Executive Headteacher and Chair of LPB would already be attending their respective working groups (TMG and CoLPB).

### 6.4 Senior Leadership Teams (SLT)

Each school / group of schools has a Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Senior staff are appointed by the Chief Executive (or ELT in jurisdiction). Wessex has a framework for effective SLT operation, meeting and line management.

## 7. Delegation Matrix

### 7.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Delegation Matrix in Part 2 is to provide an easily accessible guide to 'who does what' in the Trust – to show where accountability lies, who has responsibility for conducting routines and taking initiatives and where information and/or consultation can be expected.

The Delegation Matrix does not contain details of every aspect of Trust or school governance and leadership. Its content needs to be read in conjunction with the preceding Sections 1 to 7 of Part 1 (as above) and the Trust's strategic plans, policies and procedures. In the event of uncertainties over whose responsibility it is to carry out a particular function, guidance should be sought from the Chair of the Trust Board.

### 7.2 Priority Considerations

In determining the Delegation Matrix, Trustees have been mindful of the following:

- The Trust Board is ultimately accountable for the development of its children/young people and therefore the way its schools are run. Appropriate reports on the matters delegated therefore need to be written to enable Trustees and ELT to have appropriate oversight
- The Trust is providing an increasing number of central services. These services will be designed to improve the quality of education offered and to achieve economies of scale and specialisation, in the areas of 'back-office' administration and in school improvement and curriculum leadership
- The Trust Board, in making decisions, is reliant on information and advice from its committees, LPBs, Chief Executive and the ELT. The COLPB and TMG also provide a vital link in the chain to ensure good communication and connection between the Trust Board and its schools
- The level of delegation reflects the particular circumstances of each individual school. Where there is strong leadership and governance, relative autonomy will have been earned and so levels of delegation are along the lines as outlined in Part 2. Where schools are causing concern (eg

leadership, governance, curriculum, standards, safeguarding, finance etc), certain responsibilities are taken back by the Trust Board as outlined in the Intervention Policy in Part 3.

### 7.3 Termination and Amendments

The Delegation Matrix is subject to annual review by the Trust Board but it reserves the right to make appropriate amendments 'in year' when deemed necessary. Changes, at any time, are made in the light of lessons learned from best operational practice, unforeseen difficulties and new statutory requirements. In extreme cases, the Trust Board may terminate the Delegation Matrix for a school and withdraw the LPB's delegated powers as outlined in the Intervention Policy in Part 3.

## Part 2. Delegation Matrix

### Key to Delegation Matrix

<b>R</b>	Responsible; those responsible for the task who ensure that it is done
<b>A</b>	Accountable; those ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the task and the one who delegates work to those responsible
<b>A/R</b>	Both Responsible and Accountable
<b>C</b>	Consult; those whose opinions are sought and with whom there is two way communication
<b>I</b>	Informed; those who are kept up to date with progress and are informed of outcomes

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>1. Governance</b>										
1.1 Amend Articles of Association	A	C	C	C		I	I	I	R	Reviewed bi-annually unless otherwise directed by DfE
1.2 Appoint/remove Members (non-Foundation)	A/R	I	C	I		I	I	I	I	
1.3 Appoint/remove Members (Foundation)	C	I	A/R	I		I	I	I	I	
1.4 Complete/review Member register of interests	A					I			R	
1.5 Appoint/remove Trustees (non-Foundation)	A/R	C	I	C		I	I	I	I	
1.6 Appoint/remove Trustees (Foundation)	C	C	A/R	C		I	I	I	I	
1.7 Complete/review Trustee register of interests		A				I			R	
1.8 Annually complete Trust Board skills audit and training plan	I	A		I		C			R	
1.9 Elect Chair/Vice-Chair of Trust Board annually	I	A	I	I		I	I	I	R	
1.10 Appoint/remove Board Committee Chairs annually	I	A	I	I	C	I	I	I	R	
1.11 Determine and allocate specific Trustee roles e.g Safeguarding, SEND, Careers	I	A	I	I		I	I	I	R	
1.12 Agree and review terms of reference for Committees annually		A	I	C	R	I	I		C	
1.13 Agree and review terms of reference for Local Partnership Boards annually		A	I	C	CoLPB	I	I	I	R	
1.14 Appoint/remove Governance Professional	I	A/R	I	C		I	I	I		
1.15 Agree the Scheme of Governance annually	I	A/R	I	C		I	I	I	C	
1.16 Agree governance meeting dates and agendas	I	A		C	C	I	I	I	R	

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
1.17 Approve Trust-wide statutory policies		A		C	R	C	I	I		
1.18 Conduct Trust Board self-evaluation of governance effectiveness annually		A		I					R	
1.19 Agree and submit annual report and financial statements	I	A	I	C		DoO	I	I		
1.20 Present Chief Executive report to Trustees		A		R					C	
1.21 Present Trust Board report to Members annually	A	R	I	C			I			
1.22 Set up any subsidiary company or charity		A	I	C		DoO	I	I	I	
1.23 Establish and review Trust Governance structure including committee structure	I	A/R		C		I	I	I	C	
1.24 Publish governance arrangements on Trust website		A							R	
1.25 Approve new schools joining the Trust	I	A/R	I	C		C	I	I	I	
1.26 Make LPB appointments including ratifying Chair and Vice Chair		A/R	I				C	C	I	
1.27 Appoint/remove Clerk to Local Partnership Board		A	I			I	C	C	C	
1.28 Appoint/remove Partners (Foundation)		A/R	C				I	C	I	
1.29 Complete LPB register of interests and keep under review		A					R	I	I	Clerk to LPB to maintain
1.30 Complete LPB self-evaluation of governance effectiveness annually		A		I			R	I	C	Clerk to LPB to facilitate
1.31 Commission 3-yearly external review of governance		A		I					R	
1.32 Maintain a Trustee/Local Partner expenses policy		A		I		DoO	I			

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>2. Values and Ethos, Strategy and Vision</b>										
2.1 Determine trust's vision, strategy, ethos/culture and key priorities	A	R	I	C		C	I	I	I	
2.2 Agree Trust growth strategy		A/R	I	C		C			I	
2.3 Maintain and develop the Christian distinctiveness at Church schools	A	R	C	C	VE		C	C	I	
2.4 Develop and implement engagement channels with key stakeholders in line with trust vision and priorities		A	C	R	VE		C	C	I	
2.5 Determine local policy where needed or supplements to Trust policy, where required				A		C	C	R		
2.6 Comply with all statutory obligations including those in the Academy Trust Handbook, charity law, employment law and health and safety		A		R	FBS	C			C	
2.7 Ensure that there are appropriate financial controls so that there is regularity, probity and value for money in relation to the management of public funds		A		R		C				
<b>Christian Ethos</b> (where applicable)										
2.8 Report to the Wessex Values and Ethos Committee the effectiveness of the school's distinctive Christian vision	A	A	I	A	VE		R	R		
2.9 Evaluate the impact of Collective Worship	A	A	I	A	VE		A/R	R		
2.10 Perform robust and continuous self evaluation to ensure effectiveness as a Church schools	A	A	I	A	VE		R	R		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>3. Leadership</b>										
3.1 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT lead colleagues with high expectations with a supportive & collegiate culture but with high levels of challenge and accountability (Radical Candor)		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if expectations are falling short. Heads are responsible for the culture and effectiveness of leadership in their schools. Wessex Central will support with Leadership coaching.
3.2 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT lead with a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values & practice		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if expectations are falling short. Heads are responsible for the culture and effectiveness of leadership in their schools.
3.3 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT lead the focus on improving staff's subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment. The practice and subject knowledge of staff are built up and improve over time		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if expectations are falling short. Heads are responsible for the culture and effectiveness of leadership in their schools. Wessex Central supports Professional Learning
3.4 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT engage effectively with learners and others in their community, including – where relevant; parents, carers, employers and local services		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if expectations are falling short. Heads are responsible for the culture and effectiveness of leadership in their schools. Wessex Central Team will seek learner and stakeholder views
3.5 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way that they manage staff, including their workload		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if expectations are falling short. Heads are responsible for the culture and effectiveness of leadership in their schools. Staff surveys are issued by Wessex Central

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
3.3.6 Wessex Exec/Heads and SLT leaders protect their staff from bullying and harassment		A		A		ELT	A	R		Heat Maps trigger intervention if there are concerns. Heads are responsible for the culture in their schools.
3.3.7 Partners understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that their school(s) has / have a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold SLT to account for the quality of education and training		A			RSA		R			ELT Heat Maps and <i>School Effectiveness Ratings</i> will inform Trustees of the overall effectiveness of the LPB
3.3.9 The school has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to: identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help learners reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to learners and vulnerable adult		A		A		ELT	A	R		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>4. Quality of Education</b>										
<b>4.1 'Academic' Curriculum Provision</b>										
4.1.1 Approve Trust-wide curriculum, including curriculum convergence, quality assuring the sequencing and intent		A		R	SSI	DoP		C		Curriculum Policy will establish a broad and balanced curriculum which comply with the terms of any curriculum requirements determined by the Board PSL is responsible for the delivery of the Pre-school and EYFS curricula and its quality assurance DoP is responsible for the delivery of the KS1/KS2 curricula and their quality assurance DoSE is responsible for the delivery of the Ks3/KS4/KS5 curricula and their quality assurance
4.1.2 Agree equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement and monitor delivery		A/R				C				
4.1.3 Review the Wessex Quality of Education policy and the Wessex Principles				A	SSI	DOL		C		
4.1.4 Set the Religious Education policy so as to develop and enhance the Christian Distinctiveness of Church schools (as is the legal requirement of local areas for the teaching of RE)		A	C	R	VE		R	R		Headteachers must ensure that each school is meeting the relevant statutory requirements and satisfying the requirements of the Church of England Board of Education Statement of Entitlement and the Memoranda of Understanding. Key involvement for Foundation representatives
4.1.5 Effectively prepare for pre-public examinations, external				A	SSI	DOL	C	R		CE to work with (Executive)

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
examinations and statutory assessments										Headteachers to determine exam policy and ensure all learners are following appropriate examination and statutory assessment preparation courses
<b>4.2 'Pastoral / Welfare' Curriculum</b>										
4.2.1 Set and review the Wessex pastoral and welfare curriculum policy, provision and standard operating procedures so that they are agile, up to date and meet learners' current needs				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		Personal resilience and understanding of self Personal skill set development Emotional Intelligence response to topical issues All will be quality assured by SLT and will be evaluated by the Welfare and Safeguarding Manager
4.2.2 <i>Character Education</i> is a key Wessex USP, 'directed' Centrally within a Wessex values framework but further designed implemented locally, with QA by the Central Team				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		Each school's curriculum and wider work support learners to develop their character, including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy
4.2.3 <i>Learner Participation</i> is a key Wessex USP, 'directed' Centrally within a Wessex values framework but further designed implemented locally, with QA by the Central Team				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		The engagement of learners in activities that include them, make them feel of value and unlock motivation & talent is a strong aspect of the Wessex value set. Each school will design their own 'House' & engagement system
4.2.4 Ensure the pastoral / tutor curriculum facilitates anti-radicalisation and promotes equality, diversity and tolerance	I	A	I	A	SSI	WSM	R	R		
4.2.5 Determine Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural policy and			I	A	SSI	WSM	C	C		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
provision										
4.2.6 Deliver the Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural policy and evaluate its effectiveness			I	A	SSI	WSM	A	R		Heads to implement, monitor and evaluate
4.2.7 Determine Relationship and Sex Education provision (SRE)			I	A	SSI	WSM	C	C		
<b>4.3 Employability</b>										
4.3.1 Determine policy and provision of work enterprise and employability education		A		R	SSI	Empl Co-ord	C	C		'Gatsby' benchmark complied with The Trust strategy (8-19) for careers education and employability should be implemented in all appropriate schools to take advantage of the support of the employability coordinator
4.3.2 Determine policy provision of off-site visits				A/R	SSI	DOO	C	C		(Executive)Headteachers to implement agreed policy overseen by CE Should comply fully with Somerset Outdoor Education guidelines and MAT Health & Safety Policies Annual checks required to ensure schools are following statutory procedures (Executive) Headteachers report all proposed residential visits to CE before seeking the approval of LPBs
<b>4.4 Wrap Around &amp; Holiday Provision</b>										
4.4.1 Determine Wessex provision strategy for wrap-around care and holiday provision (financials)		A/R		A/R	FBS	DOP PSL	C	C		The business model and social responsibility of wrap-around care is determined by the Trust Board and Central Team

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
4.4.2 Determine Wessex policy for wrap-around care and holiday provision		A		A/R	SSI	DOP PSL	C	C		
4.4.3 Deliver high quality Wrap Around Care and holiday provision				A	A SSI	A PSL	A	R		Delivery and QA of Wrap Around Care is the responsibility of the Head
4.4.4 Determine pay rates and contractual details for wrap-around care and holiday provision				A	A FBS	A DOO	C	C		The ELT / Trust Board will drive consistency and practice across its schools
<b>4.5 Quality &amp; Standards</b>										
4.5.1 Ensure that standards of Teaching and Learning are Good or Outstanding  Includes all sectors (ie Pre-Schools, Sixth Forms and Alternative Provision)  Teaching to meet National Standards framework	I	A	I	R	SSI	DOP	A	R		Advice and support from SIPs, external consultants as required and leaders of learning for schools and LPB. (Executive) Headteachers responsible for observing and evaluating quality of teaching and responsible for securing improvements under the oversight of the CE.
4.5.2 Teaching Assistants to meet National Standards framework	I	A		R	SSI	DOS	A	R		
4.5.3 Pastoral & Welfare staff to meet National Standards	I	A		R	SSI	WSM	A	R		
4.5.4 Set challenging learner progress targets	I	A		R	SSI	DOP	A	R		Learner progress targets set by the CE / DoP / DoSE and agreed by SSI / Trust Board
4.5.5 Devise and amend Trust assessment, recording and reporting systems to be effective in delivering high progress outcomes (ARR)	I	A		R	SSI	DOP	A	R		ARR systems are consistent across the Trust, set by Central. They allow for clear communication for learner progress. School leaders are responsible for

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										closing the improvement loop. LPBs are accountable for progress
4.5.6 Devise a consistent and synonymous learner testing strategy for each stage/phase, that will interact with same stage schools and talk to different stage schools	I	I		R	SSI	DOP	A	R		Schools are responsible for administering the testing regime, analysing test outcomes and closing the improvement loop
4.5.7 Learner progress and subject progress meetings are held regularly to review progress				I	I	A	A	R		Learner Progress and subject progress meetings are scheduled regularly and acted upon effectively by school leaders School progress evaluation articulates sub-group analysis
4.5.8 Learner progress and attainment meet Trust targets	I	A		R	A SSI	R DOL DOP	A	R		Support from SIPs (Executive) Headteachers responsible for embedding Trust-set learner progress targets into school monitoring systems Trustees receive reporting through SSI Analysis of progress provided by (Executive) Heads to LPBs & Central for the purposes of scrutiny at local level where progress is insufficient or not meeting targets.
<b>5. School Effectiveness &amp; Improvement</b>										
<b>5.1. Planning &amp; Evaluation</b>										
5.1.1 Implement the <u>Trust</u> Self Evaluation Form (SEF)	I	A		R	SSI	ELT	C	C		Trust SEF informs School Improvement Team of action needed and informs the Trust AIP

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
5.1.2 Implement the annual <u>Trust</u> Improvement Plan (AIP) which takes account of the Trust Board's priorities	I	A		R	SSI	ELT	C	C		CE and DOL draw up Trust-wide AIP Trust meeting at start of academic year to make sure schools have information to integrate into schools' plans
5.1.3 Implement the <i>school</i> Self Evaluation Form (SEF)				I	I		R	R		Headteacher/SLT evaluate school's progress School SEF informs the school's SLT and LPB of action needed and informs school's AIP
5.1.4 Implement the <i>school</i> Annual Improvement Plan (AIP), that takes account of the Trust's priorities and that school's improvement needs	I	I		A	SSI	A	R	R		Annual improvement plan drawn up by SLTs at each school for approval of the CE/DOL Annual improvement plan should include an evaluation of progress against targets in the previous year's plan LPB Improvement Plan to go to Trust Board
5.1.5 Implement performance Heat Maps for each ELT & Central Team Functional area		A		R	AR	ELT	C	C		
5.1.6 Evaluate schools through a regular School's Rating process, using the Heat Maps		A		R	AR	ELT	C	C		
<b>5.2 Intervention</b>										
5.2.1 Implement the system for monitoring and evaluation of school improvement plans		A		R	SSI	R	C	I		Using the LPBs, the Trust subject groups, lead teachers and the Trust SSI, put in place a streamline system for monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions in the schools' improvement plans

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
5.2.2 Action quality assurance calendar and programme		A		R	SSI	R	R	R		QA programmes are the responsibility of each level of leadership Each school to have a QA programme LPBs to have their own QA programme
5.2.3 Implement common Wessex improvement strategies and 'tool boxes' for each stage/phase, that interact with same stage schools and talk to different stage schools		I		R	SSI	R		C		Trust wide standard improvement strategies set by the CE and DOL and agreed by SSI / Trust Board Heads are responsible for implementation and fine tuning with staff and learners
5.2.4 Direct and co-ordinate external partner involvement to the school improvement needs of the Trust		I		A	SSI	R	A	C		SI to facilitate external challenge partner involvement in schools (eg SIPs) to support school improvement. School leaders to also ensure external challenge is directed to the learning progress needs of the school
5.2.5 Evaluate overall impact of Raising Achievement Plans (RAPs) for subjects, themes and take action to ensure effectiveness	I	I		A	SSI	R	A	R		SI to have oversight of Trust RAPs, evaluate progress and take action if progress too slow School leaders to be responsible for RAPs on the ground in their schools
5.2.6 Evaluate overall impact of teacher support plans and take action to ensure effectiveness	I	I		A	SSI	R	A	R		SI to support and evaluate any teacher support plans and take action to improve if necessary, so that they are effective Teacher support plans are the responsibility of the Head to action LPBs remain accountable for ensuring teachers meet National Standards
5.2.7 Direct & co-ordinate Wessex Subject Groups, Lead		I		A	SSI	R		C		SI to co-ordinate whole Trust school

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
Practitioners and Associates to the school improvement needs of the Trust										improvement activity Each school to contribute to the wider school improvement team and to embed practice in their own schools
5.2.8 Co-ordinate and drive (senior) school improvement / teaching & learning lead staff across the Trust from each school		I		A	SSI	R		C		SI to provide leadership of (senior) school improvement / teaching & learning leads
5.2.9 Link school improvement needs and appraisal development needs to Trust-wide continuous professional development opportunities		I		A	SSI	DoPC		C		DoPC to co-ordinate Trust CPD provision where there are common development aspects School leaders are still responsible for deficit gap CPD provision School leaders are responsible for effective appraisal in their schools
5.2.10 Act on key issues raised as a result of an Ofsted, HMI or SIAMS inspection and to ensure a post inspection action plan is in place	I	A	I	R	SSI	R	A	R		Post Ofsted action plan to be drawn up by CE if as a result of Ofsted school is in category 3 or 4 Trustees responsible for monitoring actions in the plan and consideration of withdrawing delegation of responsibilities for all or part of the academies work (see Part 3)
5.2.11 Apply Pupil Premium funding through the Trust Vulnerable Learner strategy and monitor its impact	I	A		R	SSI	R	A	C		SI to drive Vulnerable Learner strategy Heads are responsible for actioning in their school and achieving outcomes LPBs are accountable for outcomes Heads must publish how money is spent on their school's website
5.2.12 Decide on the SEND strategy to maximising learner progress	I	A		R	SSI	Do SEND	A	R		DoSEND to drive Trust Special Educational Needs & disabilities

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										strategy Heads are responsible for actioning in their school and achieving outcomes LPBs are accountable for outcomes

6. Learner Welfare and Safeguarding										
6.1 Safeguarding										
6.1.1 Refresh and update the Trust Safeguarding and Protect policies and SOPs considering annual changes	I	A		R	SSI	WSM	C	R		
6.1.2 Ensure that the school has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to: identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help learners reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help	I	A		A	SSI	WSM	R	R		Each school is responsible for being compliant to safeguarding regulations
6.1.3 Set Wessex Early Help protocols and graduated response systems				A		WSM	A	C		Support and guidance to ensure learners needs are met achieving consistency and best practice across Wessex
6.1.4 Prohibit radicalisation and promote equality, diversity and tolerance	I	A		R	SSI	WSM	A	R		Trust policies and procedures to be reviewed by WSM annually Trust policy to be implemented by (Executive) Headteachers and monitored by LPBs.
6.1.5 Manage safer recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to learners and vulnerable adults		A		A	FBS	DoPC	R	R		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
6.1.6 Maintain, effective and secure learner records	I	A		A		WSM	A	R		Common IT used (Safeguard My School) throughout the Trust – accurate data – central services staff to maintain for GDPR compliancy
6.1.7 Comply with all data protection legislation including GDPR and good practice and comply legal regulation such as the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998	I	A		A	AR	DoPC	R	R		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>6.2 Relationships, Behaviour &amp; Inclusion</b>										
6.2.1 Determine the Trust's Relationships, Behaviour & Discipline policy, so that they mirror the Trust's values and ethos				R	SSI	WSM	C	C		Behaviour policy and common Trust (behaviour stages) response set out by CE and WSM with consultation Behaviour is seen as a function of curriculum and implementation of teaching & learning (as well as social factors) (Executive)Headteachers to implement WSM to report to Trustees on any material concerns about the operation of the policies
6.2.2 Determine the Trust's Rewards policy, so that it mirrors the Trust's values and ethos				R	SSI	WSM	C	C		Rewards policy and common Trust response set out by CE and WSM with consultation. Localised structures will be in place.
6.2.3 Determine graduated response systems for inclusion so that they mirror the Trust's values and ethos				A	SSI	WSM	C	C		Graduated response inclusion systems are set by the CE & WSM, are consistent across the Trust and allow for clear communication for learner inclusion to be made School Leaders to administer the systems Trust software to be used to record actions taken LPBs are accountable for inclusion
6.2.4 The Head / SLT maintains high expectations for learners' behaviour and conduct and applies these expectations consistently and fairly.				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		This is reflected in learners' behaviour and conduct
6.2.5 The Head / SLT ensures learners' attitudes to their				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		Learners are committed to their

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
education are positive.										learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements
6.2.6 The Head / SLT ensures relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		
6.2.7 The Head / SLT create an environment where bullying, child-on-child abuse or discrimination are not tolerated				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		If they do occur, staff deal with issues quickly and effectively, and do not allow them to spread
6.2.8 Provision Review Meetings are undertaken in each school				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		PRMs are undertaken by school leaders in the case of a disaffected learner
6.2.9 Determine the exclusion and re-admittance process, including the Standard Operating Procedures				A	SSI	WSM	I	C		Exclusion process and re-admittance process set by the CE and WSM Trust software to be used to record actions taken
6.2.10 Notify others of exclusions				I	SSI	WSM	A	R		Headteacher to notify WSM and LPB, in line with policy
6.2.11 Make the decision to suspend a learner for a day or half a day (non-SEND or vulnerable)				A	SSI	WSM	A	R		(Executive) Headteacher responsible for coordinating and managing the process
6.2.12 Make the decision to suspend a learner for more than a day or for a learner who has accumulated more than 5 suspensions in the last 6 weeks		A		A	SSI	WSM	A	R		Wessex Welfare & Safeguarding Manager needs eyes on the process if more than 1 day or 5 separate suspensions in the last 6 weeks
6.2.13 Make the decision to suspend a learner who is deemed		A		A	SSI	Do	A	R		Wessex does not advocate suspending

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
vulnerable or who has SEND						SEND WSM				a learner who is vulnerable or has an SEND (or both). WSM / DoSEND must approve / seek alternative action A vulnerable learner may be someone on a care plan, a child looked after, someone on 'care' watch or someone who has been flagged as a worry by the school or Trust
6.2.14 Establish a Review Panel, if required, following a suspension						WSM	A	R		The WSM will convene a Review Panel in conjunction with the Head, if necessary, with Wessex Protocol
6.2.15 Make the decision to ' <u>permanently</u> exclude' a learner		A	I	R	SSI	WSM	A	R		If the Exec/ Headteacher makes the decision to PEx the process must be QA'd by the WSM if it is to move forward to the LPB. The LPB must agree the decision. The CE must then agree / quality assure that decision after assessing the provision put in place for the learner and severity of the issue
6.2.16 To review overall pattern and use of exclusions across the Trust		A		C	SSI	WSM	C	R		School Leaders to be responsible for levels of exclusions in their school WSM to intervene if levels are 'high'
6.2.17 Review and arrange alternative provision where possible		A		A	SSI	WSM	A	R		WSM to promote Trust Alternative Provision functionality to meet the needs of otherwise learners that will be PEx'd WSM to drive the re-engagement strategy WSM may action a 'managed move' of a learner between Trust schools, either

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										permanently or for 'rest-bite' To review exclusion decisions and consider reinstatement in applicable places
6.2.18 Establish an Independent Review Panel, if required, following a permanent exclusion				C	SSI	WSM	R	R	I	Independent Review Panel to be organised by the school, in conjunction with the WSM. If the decision is overturned, the school pays any fine
<b>6.3 Admissions</b>										
6.3.1 Determine and publish admissions criteria		A		R		DoO	C	I		Trust strategy for growth should be implemented by the CE in consultation with (Executive) Head and LPB
6.3.2 Set Pupil Admission Number (PAN) and working PAN (where applicable)		A		R	AR	DoO	C	I		Decisions on PAN are responsibility of the Trust in its capacity as Admission Authority. Any changes in PAN must be agreed by the Trust to ensure they meet the Trust growth strategy
6.3.3 Hold Admission Panel meeting and make school application decisions		A		A/R		DoO		R		Must be in accordance with published admissions arrangements determined by the Board criteria which supports the necessary growth. In-year admissions may be delegated to the individual school and the Head to process (this may be withdrawn by the CE)
6.3.4 Make arrangements for independent appeals panels		A		R		DoO		I		(Executive) Headteacher must consult CE before going to appeal to ensure strategic growth objectives are considered and pupil vacancies are utilised

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>6.4 Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b>										
6.4.1 SLT ensure that learners have high attendance and are punctual							A	R		WSM QAs school performance
6.4.2 The Wessex Attendance Policy, SOP and standard letters				A	SSI	WSM		C		Set centrally by WSM & reviewed annually
6.4.3 The Wessex attendance strategy and ethos		I		C	SSI	WSM DoO	A	R		Set centrally by WSM
6.4.4 Monitor, promote and take action around learner attendance, including 'Attendance PPMs' and Persistent Absence PPMs and sub groups with attendance issues						A	A	R		Heads are responsible for the outcomes Trustees/Partners to receive agreed level of reporting
6.4.5 Hold parental surgeries to support learner attendance in school					SSI	A	A	R		Process set and standardised by WSM

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>7. Business Services: Finance</b>										
<b>7.1 Financial Management</b>										
7.1.1 Set Wessex finance policies including those relating to Gifts and Charging and Remissions		A	I	A	FBS	DoO	I	I		Reviewed annually and amended according to Academy Trusts Handbook and MAT growth requirement
7.1.2 Appoint External Accountants	A	R			FBS AR	DoO DoF				
7.1.3 Approve annual accounts		A/R		C		C	I			AGM to be held to approve accounts before the end of the Autumn term. Accounts to be published at Companies House and displayed on the WLT website and academies websites
7.1.4 Maintain an effective internal control environment		A		R	FBS	DoF				Annual internal audit to be undertaken together with audits of specific areas such as the annual Teachers' Pension audit.
7.1.5 Appoint Accounting Officer		A/R		C		I				In line with the Articles of Association and Academy Trust Handbook
7.1.6 Ensure financial policies and procedures are in line with Academy Trusts Handbook		A		R	FBS	DoO				Polices to be reviewed annual or as prescribed by legislation/good practice. All policies to be published on the WLT website and academies websites
<b>7.2 Allocation of Funds</b>										

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
7.2.1 Decide on how schools are financed, including the Trust Central Charge to schools, including charging for school improvement and business services		A		R	FBS	DoO DoF		I		The Trust Board will continuously evaluate the best way to fund schools.
7.2.2 Make charges to schools that fall below Wessex floor standards / poor School Ratings		A		R	FBS SSI	DoO	I	C		Additional charges made to bring standards up, with additional funding used to provide additional resource. Trigger mechanisms on school improvement will inform this process.
7.2.3 Agree the allocations of funds for the provision of central services		A		R		C	I	C		Three year budget plan for central services should be aligned with review of support staff and future growth of the MAT
7.2.4 Allocate funding to individual schools		A		C		DoO DoF	I			Three year budget plan for individual academies is drawn up in consultation with CE and endorsed by LPBs before being recommended to the Trust Board for approval.
7.2.5 Set and approve school budgets		A		C		DoO DoF	I			Three year budget plan for individual academies are drawn up in consultation with CE and LPBs before being recommended to the Trust Board for approval.
7.2.6 Monitor and manage central service finances in line with approved budget		A		A	FBS	DoF				
7.2.7 Monitor, control and intervene on the effectiveness of school finances in line with approved budgets		A		A	FBS	DoF	I	R		DoF to monitor spending of each school against budget and report regularly (4 times a year) to the FBS Committee, reviewing variance, best value and non-duplication with Central Services

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										Wessex Central will intervene on schools where financial management concerns are triggered (see appendices) and reserve the right to remove budgetary control.
7.2.8 Manage budgets on the ground in schools				A	FBS	C	I	R		The Head is responsible for managing their delegated budget, achieving best value and non-duplication with Central Services
7.2.9 Approve overtime payments				A	I	DoF	I	R		The payment of overtime must be agreed in advance, for a specific function and period of time, for a specific person. The Head is held responsible for adherence to this process.
7.2.10 Monitor performance of central function		A		R	FBS	DoO				DoO reports to CE and Trust Board
7.2.11 Approve expenditure between £1 and £10,000				A		DoF		R		Limits set in Finance Policy.
7.2.12 Approve expenditure between £10,001 and £30,000				A		DoO		C		Limits set in Finance Policy.
7.2.13 Approve expenditure between £30,001 and £100,000		A		I	FBS	DoO		C		Limits set in Finance Policy.
7.2.14 Approve expenditure between £100,001 and £300,00		A		C	FBS	DoO		I		A panel of three Trustee nominated by FBS to make up the 'Procurement Decision Making Group' can authorise between £100,001 and £300,000. Limits set in Finance Policy.
7.2.15 Approve expenditure over £300,001		A/R		C	FBS	DoO		I		Limits set in Finance Policy.
7.2.16 Strategic allocation of Trust Financial Reserves		A/R		C	FBS	DoO		I		Reserves will be managed by the Trust Board in line with the Reserves Policy.

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
7.2.17 Operational spend of Financial Reserves by a school		A/R		C	FBS	C		C		Schools must ask permission of the Trust Board to spend financial reserves

## 8. Business Services: Estates

### 8.1 Asset Management

8.1.1 Set the <i>Trust</i> Asset Management Policy and plan including the deployment of capital and maintenance funding		A		C	FBS	DoE	C	C		Director of Estates will set / agree the Asset Management Plan for the Trust Schools to ensure that they meet the high-quality standards of the Wessex brand
8.1.2 Set <i>school</i> asset Management Policy and plan				C	FBS	DoE		R		Director of Estates will act on behalf of the Trustees and provide direction to the Headteacher. The Head will be responsible for actioning this on the ground.
8.1.3 Acquire a freehold/ leasehold on land or buildings		A	C	C	FBS	DoO				The acquisition or disposal of freehold land or buildings needs approval of the ESFA. Where applicable the Diocese's approval is sought. Where applicable LA approval is to be sought.
8.1.4 Dispose of a freehold on land or buildings		A	C	C	FBS	DoO				The acquisition or disposal of freehold land or buildings needs approval of the ESFA. Where applicable the Diocese's approval is to sought. Where applicable LA approval is to be sought.
8.1.5 Enter/ grant any leasehold or tenancy agreements		A	C	C	FBS	DoE				The ESFA must give approval for any leasehold or tenancy agreement on land or buildings.

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										Where applicable the Diocese's approval is to be sought.
8.1.6 Organise Building maintenance programme				C		DoE		C		Annual completion of the Land and Buildings Collection to be undertaken by the Director of Estates in consultation with schools.
8.1.7 Allocate capital funding from the School Condition Allowance				A	FBS	DoE		C		Capital projects above £30,000 are to have prior approval of the Board.
<b>8.2 Compliance</b>										
8.2.1 Ensure health & safety / legal compliance		A		A	FBS	DoE	R	R		Director of Estates holds School Leadership to account on Health & Safety procedures and adherence to best practice and compliance.
8.2.2 Ensure compliance to dealing with Asbestos regulations		A		A	FBS	DoE	R	R		Director of Estates holds School Leadership to account on Asbestos safety procedures and adherence to compliance.
8.2.3 Set the Estates / Site system for compliance and regulation		A		A	I	DoE	I	C		Director of Estates to set a common compliance system for the whole Trust. Currently this is 'I am Compliant'.
8.2.4 Set the priorities for Site Maintenance including DSG / maintenance funding and approve minor works		A		A	FBS	DoE	C	C		Director of Estates to in-effect line manage site staff in schools to ensure priority activity is delivered and sites meet quality thresholds for a 'Wessex School'.
8.2.5 Review and where beneficial, consolidate the provision of all support services		A		C	FBS	DoO	I	C		Define areas where central provision will match the needs of the Trust,

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										improve quality of the services, whilst delivering value.
<b>8.3 School Meals</b>										
8.3.1 Ensure school meals comply with School Food Standards							A/R	R		Monitor provision of school meals and ensure they comply with DfE publication "School Food in England".
8.3.2 Provide free school meals to those who meet the criteria							A/R	R		Monitor free school meals.
8.3.3 Create a Wessex catering Service if desirable		A/R		C	AR	DoO	C	C		If desirable the Trust Board will consult with all stakeholders

<b>9. People and Culture</b>										
<b>9.1 Structures &amp; Recruitment</b>										
9.1.1 Review, audit and implement change to roles and responsibilities (all staff) to meet the changing needs of the expanding Trust		A		A/R	FBS	DoPC	C	C		New and redeployed appointments need to be agreed with the CE in line with the Trusts growth and SSI improvement plans Revised staffing structures need to be agreed between CE and Heads.
9.1.2 Review of major changes to staffing structures (eg Faculty, House, SENCO, Senior roles, other Middle Leadership roles etc)		A		A	FBS	DoO DoPC	C	C		In order to achieve some consistency and cluster school effectiveness the Central Team request that major changes to structures & ROLES are discussed with ELT.
9.1.3 Agree staff recruitment and redeployment selection criteria (process or mechanism) to ensure that all appointments deliver value against pupil improvement		A		A/R	FBS	DoPC	C	C		All staffing changes should be made without the written authorisation of the CE Agreed measurement to be defined

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										linking staff changes to pupil improvement criteria.
9.1.4 Implement and monitor staff succession plan to ensure that talent is retained and gaps identified for targeted recruitment that benefits the Trust as a whole		A		C	FBS	DoPC	C	C		Appointments need to be agreed with the CE in line with the shadow staffing structure before posts are advertised CE and central HR services to be involved in the appointment process in consultation with school Heads and LPBs and have an input into the job description Note – This may mean recruiting an ‘over skilled’ person into a role (dual hatting), part funded from centre.
9.1.5 Job descriptions and person specifications.		A		C	FBS	DoPC		C		Draw up centrally to achieve consistency.
9.1.6 Recruitment and advertising procedures		A		C	FBS	DoPC		C		Set centrally to achieve consistency.
9.1.7 Selection procedures		A		C	FBS	DoPC		C		Set centrally to achieve consistency. Schools will carry out the process within the Wessex protocol, unless it is a Senior position or a centrally recruited post.
9.1.8 Appointment, contract and induction processes		A	C	C	FBS	DoPC		I		Set centrally to achieve consistency. Schools will carry out the process within the Wessex protocol, unless it is a Senior position or a centrally recruited post.
<b>9.2 People Policies and SOPs</b>										
9.2.1 Determine HR related policies		A		C	FBS	DoPC	C	C		All HR policies are published on the Wessex website and academies’

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										websites. (Executive) Headteachers should consult with the CE before any actions are taken regarding HR policies.
9.2.2 Set Criteria for Annual Pay Award (all staff)		A		R	FBS	DoO	I	I		Pay awards and any changes to staff terms and conditions is the responsibility of the Trust Board based on recommendations of the CE.
9.2.3 Make changes to Terms and Conditions collective agreement		A		R	FBS	DoPC	C	C		As above
<b>9.3 Central Trust Level Appointments</b>										
9.3.1 Appoint the Chief Executive	C	A/R	C				I	I		Appointment process will be the responsibility of the Trust Board. All associated administration to be conducted by HR central services. Annual pay Review of CE.
9.3.2 Undertake disciplinary & capability procedures involving the CE	A	R								External advice and support will be sought in these circumstances.
9.3.3 Appoint the DOP, DOO, DOL and Senior Directors / ELT		A		R	FBS	DoPC	I	I		External support will be available during the appointment process.
9.3.4 Undertake disciplinary and capability procedures involving the DOP, DOO, and ELT		A		R	AR	DoPC				All actions associated with this process is the responsibility of the CE who will be supported by external HR.
9.3.5 Appoint all other central services personnel		I		A/R	FBS	DoPC	I	I		Central services personnel appointments will be overseen and conducted by the CE and Trustees. Create strategic plan that match central services to 'trigger points'

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
										providing scope for growth.
9.3.6 Undertake disciplinary and capability procedures for other central services staff		I		A/R		DoPC				All HR actions associated with the central services team are the responsibility of the CE in line with MAT policies and procedures determined by the Trust Board.
<b>9.4 School Level Appointments</b>										
9.4.1 Appoint Executive Headteacher/Headteacher		A	C	R	FBS	DoPC	C			Before a post is advertised the CE, on behalf of the Trust Board should be consulted by the LPB on all matters regarding the appointment. The Trust as the employer should be kept informed and the CE and a Trustee should be included in any appointment panel for Head's of schools and SLT. Salary range and JD should be agreed by the Trust Board, CE and LPB before any action is taken.
9.4.2 Conduct of disciplinary and capability procedures against Executive Headteacher/Headteacher		A		A/R	AR	DoPC	C			LPB should seek the agreement of the CE and Trust Board before any actions are taken. LPB should seek advice from central HR services.
9.4.3 Appoint Head of school/SLT		I	I	R	FBS	DoPC	C	C		All HR matters associated with the appointment of SLT should be agreed by the CE, (Executive) Head and LPB.
9.4.4 Conduct disciplinary and capability procedures against Head of School/SLT		I		A/R	AR	DoPC	C	C		The Executive Head/Headteacher should consult the CE and LPB before any action is taken.

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
9.4.5 Other staff appointments				A/R	FBS	C	C	R		All appointments should be agreed between the CE (DOPAC), Headteacher and LPB in line with shadow staffing structure, succession plan and requirements of the Trust.
9.4.6 Conduct disciplinary and capability procedures for other staff				A	FBS	C	I	R		The Executive/Headteacher should consult the CE and LPB before any action is taken.

10. Business Services: IT										
10.1 Information Management										
10.1.1 Set Privacy Notices for staff and pupils		A		A		DoO				Schools must display WLT privacy notices on school websites
10.1.2 Register Wessex & schools with Information Commissioners' Office				A		DoO				
10.1.3 Handle Freedom of Information requests in line with WLT Policy.				A		DoO		R		Annual returns sent to the DoO for monitoring
10.1.4 Set and monitor E-safety Policies including social media, Mobile Devices and IT acceptable Use Policies.				A		DoO		R		Schools are responsible for e-safety compliance on the ground The Wessex IT Manager will set the Policies across the Trust
10.1.5 IT Data Systems				A		ITM		C		Central Wessex will standardise data systems used across the Trust
10.2 IT Support										
10.2.1 Wessex Central holds the right to hold the IT service contract for all Wessex schools				A		ITM		C		

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
10.2.2 IT procurement to be authorised by the IT Manager, following strategic direction by the Audit and Risk committee		A		A	AR	DoO	I	C		To achieve standardisation, financial economies and an operability of system
10.2.3 Cyber Security		A		A	AR	ITM	I	R		Schools are responsible for cyber security compliance on the ground. The Trust IT Manager will set the compliance systems and expectations
10.2.4 Capital Expenditure re-charge		A		A	FBS	ITM DoO	I	C		Wessex central team reserves the right to re-charge for IT capital expenditure and/or to set an IT levy to ensure back-office and front facing equipment are fit for purpose
10.2.5 ICT for Teaching & Learning				A	SSI	DoP ITM		C		To achieve a consistency and convergence the Director of Primary / IT Manager will agree ICT systems & platforms
<b>10.3 Web Reporting</b>										
10.3.1 Ensure that all policies, procedures, terms of reference and structures are published on Wessex website		A		A	AR	DoO				
10.3.2 Ensure that Wessex website complies with statutory requirements		A		A	AR	DoO				
10.3.3 Ensure that school websites comply with Wessex and statutory requirements		A		A	AR	DoO	A	R		Schools maintain their own websites and Heads must ensure that they comply with WLT and statutory requirements

	Members	Trust Board	Diocese	Chief Executive	Board Committee	ELT	LPB	Head-teacher	Gov. Prof	Comments
<b>11. Concerns and Complaints</b>										
11.1 Set the Concerns and Complaints Policy for the Trust		A		R		DOO		C		
11.2 Dealing with Concerns, Informal Complaints, Stage 1 and Stage 2 Complaints							A	R		The school is responsible for dealing with complaints in line with the Concerns and Complaints Policy
11.3 Dealing with Complaints at Stage 3		I		I		DoO	R	R		The LPB is responsible for dealing with Complaints at Stage 3.
11.4 Holding a Complaints Log							A	R		The school must hold a complaints log, which identifies the concern and the resolution.
11.4 Role of the Central Team and Trustees in reviewing complaints		A		R		DoO	C	C		The DoO and CE hold the right review any complaint stage, including Stage 3 and take appropriate action if they feel that it needs further action. Note: There is no automatic right of appeal after Stage 3
11.6 Complaints that come straight to the Central Team						C	I	R		Complaints that come straight into Central will be forwarded onto the Head and the ELT member responsible for that area will seek understanding that it has been addressed
11.7 Set the Vexatious Complaints Policy		A		R		DoO	I	C		
11.8 Dealing with Vexatious Complaints				I		DoO	R	R		Headteachers and LPBs have authority and a duty to deal with vexatious complaints, under the guidance of the policy.

## Part 3. Supporting Documents

Appendix 1: **Code of Conduct – Partners, Trustees and Members**

Appendix 2: **Policy for Intervention in Schools Causing Concern**

Appendix 3: **Wessex Learning Trust Key Performance Indicator Categories**

Appendix 4: **Policy for Engaging with the Trust School Improvement Team**

Appendix 5: Terms of Reference for Committees

Appendix 6: Abbreviations used in this document



## **Appendix 1**

### **Code of Conduct – Partners, Trustees and Members**

#### **1. Purpose**

This code of conduct is a framework for clarifying the expected behaviour of all who exercise governance responsibilities in the Wessex Learning Trust (WLT). Whilst recognising that Local Partnership Boards (LPBs) may have developed their own practice over the years, there is an overarching framework within the WLT Scheme of Governance that sets out standards of behaviour that are expected as a result of being part of WLT. It has its foundations in the Nolan Principles and good practice in the best of MATs.

This code of conduct outlines the way that Partners, Trustees and Members are expected to behave when operating in their role at meetings, on committees and in any other official capacity - both individually and collectively.

Partners, Trustees and Members are expected to explicitly accept the following guidelines and standards of behaviour before assuming their role and responsibility.

#### **2. Nolan Principles**

There are seven principles of public life set out by the Committee on Public Standards in Public Life (1995), under the chairmanship of Lord Nolan, known as the ‘Nolan Principles’. They serve as a useful framework of the high expectations there are of volunteers and employees who choose to serve as Members, Trustees or Partners in WLT.

##### **Selflessness**

*“Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.”*

##### **Integrity**

*“Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.”*

##### **Objectivity**

*“Holders of public office should make choices on merit including the making of appointments, the awarding of contracts or the recommending of individuals for rewards and benefits.”*

##### **Accountability**

*“Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.”*

##### **Openness**

*“Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.”*

##### **Honesty**

*“Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take*

*steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.”*

## **Leadership**

*“Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.”*

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- We concern ourselves with the strategic leadership and wellbeing of WLT, its member schools and the entire Trust community.
- We focus on improving educational provision and raising standards of performance.
- We recognise that the CE/Executive Headteacher/Headteacher/Head of School is responsible for the implementation of policy and management of day-to-day operations.
- We understand we are responsible for determining, monitoring and reviewing the policies and plans within which the Trust operates and evaluating the processes and outcomes of WLT.
- We appreciate there needs to be an element of instinctive support as well as a degree of constructive challenge in decision making.
- We believe that all office-holders are equal members of the governance body on which they sit.
- We realise we have no authority to act individually unless the relevant governance body has delegated such authority and only so long as it is legal and specific.
- We share collective responsibility for all decisions made by the relevant governance body.
- We have a public duty to act reasonably and without prejudice, including our responsibilities as a good employer.
- We consider the likely impact of decisions on people and organisations associated with the Trust.
- We encourage open governance and aim to put it into practice.
- We support a sense of diversity and equal opportunity across the Trust and its community.

### **4. Commitment**

- We acknowledge that significant time and energy need to be committed if the role is to be effective.
- We involve ourselves in the work of the Trust by attending meetings and accepting responsibilities including membership of committees and working groups.
- We aim to attend all meetings and give reasons for absence in advance.
- We try to get know the Trust well and respond positively to opportunities for further involvement whenever possible.
- We undertake training and development opportunities to serve the best interests of the Trust and facilitate effectiveness in the role.
- We are aware that our names must be published on the Trust and School websites along with terms of office and duties.
- We ensure that all relevant paperwork is returned and digital records deleted when we leave office.

### **5. Relationships**

- We work as a team in which professional relationships are actively promoted.
- We seek to build effective relationships with the CE/Executive Headteacher/Headteacher/Head of School and all staff, stakeholders, schools within the Trust community.

## **3**

- We are grateful for the time, effort and skills of others that are invested for the benefit of the Trust.

## 6. Confidentiality

- We observe complete confidentiality when appropriate or explicitly requested and especially when it concerns pupils, parents or staff within the Trust.
- We exercise high levels of tact and prudence when in discussion of Trust matters outside official meetings.
- We do not reveal details of any official resolution or official vote.
- We comply with the requirements of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## 7. Conduct

- We engage in open expressions of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for decisions taken by the governance body.
- We do not speak out against decisions, in public or private and including the inappropriate use of social media, outside the body of governance.
- We do not speak or act on behalf of the governance body unless authorised to do so.
- We follow established procedures when facing criticisms or complaints affecting the Trust.
- We make individual visits to schools according to protocols agreed within the Trust.
- We are mindful of our responsibility to maintain if not develop the best interests of WLT at all times.
- We declare any personal interest or potential gain from service as an office holder.

## 8. Conflicts of Interest

- We record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the Trust's business, in the published Register of Business Interests, and withdraw from any further discussion on the matter.

## 9. Suspension and Removal

- We recognise that suspension and even removal from office are last resorts and will only impose the sanctions according to regulations published in the DfE Statutory Guidance.



**Paul Jacobs**  
**Chair of the Trust Board**

**Name**  
**Member/Trustee/LPB (if LPB, insert school)**  
**Date**



## Appendix 2

### Policy for Intervention in Schools Causing Concern

The Trust will follow this policy with a graduated response which will be linked to Ofsted gradings, internal Trust reports and external reports. The Trust may remove Delegation to reflect the risks that are in this zone

#### **Intervention Criteria**

#### **Intervention Actions required by School Leaders**

- Staff *Requiring Additional Support* processes are followed by all Trust schools (pre-competency)
- Schools follow the *Teacher Experiencing Difficulties* (TED) process, which will be checked by the Director of Learning leading to a *Performance Improvement Plan*
- Competency procedures follow agreed Trust and national processes
- Subject / theme / pastoral *Raising Achievement Plans* are in place for underperforming areas
- *School Improvement Action* plans are produced by Heads / Heads of School following Trust external School Improvement Partners which are evaluated by the DOL and CE
- Schools action a *Systems Effectiveness Review* if there is an ineffective process
- All Trust schools adhere to following the national standards for the appropriate job role, be it either a teacher, teaching assistant, or business manager.
- School leaders hold staff to account against those national standards and follow national / Wessex performance procedures if there is a performance issue with a member of staff. Staff have the opportunity to close any identified deficit gap with an opportunity to talk this through with their line manager and receive training and guidance. Failure to support a member of staff's professional 'need' by not acting in timely due course will imply a need to ask appropriate questions of the line manager themselves
- The policy for 'Intervention in Schools Causing Concern' is linked to the Scheme of Delegation and delegated powers to LPBs
- Clear, effective Wessex Standard Operating Procedures are in place regarding trigger points and action and flow chart procedures across all Trust schools
- Standard School Improvement Wessex templates are used by all Trust schools
- Standard Wessex minute templates are used by Trust schools and minutes form part of the closing the loop for action activity at the start of every meeting

#### **Intervention Actions by the Trust**

The **trigger points** & action for Trust intervention will be based upon the Risk Register and RAG-rating of the KPIs in that risk register by Trust Central staff.

#### **The 'Trust' will intervene formally:**

- ✓ on a less than Good Ofsted grade
- ✓ if Ofsted judges the school to be providing a lower standard of education than at its previous inspection
- ✓ if learners progress in one or more subjects declines significantly from one year to the next
- ✓ if learners progress in one or more subjects declines gradually over more than one year
- ✓ if learner outcomes or progress in one or more subjects are not on a clear & sustainable upward trajectory
- ✓ if outcomes are consistently below progress targets set by the Trust
- ✓ if the school is not adhering to its budget

- ✓ if the school is not spending its budget effectively (financial ratios)
- ✓ if the school is not compliant with national legislation
- ✓ if the local governing board does not appear to be providing the level of effective scrutiny or challenge required
- ✓ if the school is not adhering to the policies of the Trust, its values or its leadership standards

If the Trust Board deem that local governance is not effective, then an *Interim Executive Board* (IEB) appointed by the Trust Board will replace the LPB for a set period of time.

KPI categories are listed in **Annex A**

The trigger points will relate to the specific Trust KPIs and the category the KPI is in, according to the Central Team's RAG-rating. RAG-rating is on a four-point scale, **4: Red, 3: Amber, 2: Yellow, 1: Green**. A rating of **4 / Red** depicts high concern whilst a rating of **1 / Green** depicts the lowest level of concern. The RAG-rating will be assigned according to the distance away from the target or competency that is expected in that KPI category (or sub-category). The further away, the higher the number of risk-rating.

**Failure to make progress with the actions below by a school may result in a more severe RAG-rating, which in turn will result in a higher stage of action.**

If the RAG-rating of risk-assessment comes in as an immediate high-level concern and imminent risk, which could cause considerable reputational risk, then the Chief Executive may decide to accelerate through the Stages of Action to a higher level.

### **Stages of Action**

If Central staff / CE / Trust SSI or FBS / Trust Board have concerns regarding the risk in multiple categories, the Trust will support the school in prioritising areas for improvement in accordance with the risk. The following action will be taken upon the flagging of a risk:

**Stage 1:** The Director of Operations will **verbally state** to their school counterpart concerns that they may have regarding aspects of the school's performance. This will likely refer to the RAG-Rating and risk register of that school and the categories that specifically refer to them. It may also include aspects of leadership, culture and procedural issues.

The DOO will state what the deficit gap is and what needs to be done, by whom in what time frame and set a review date. Clear success criteria will be set by the DOO.

This will be **recorded in an email**.

A successful outcome will be deemed when the RAG Rating for a specific category / categories is rated **1 / Green**.

Should the outcome evidence little / no improvement, Stage 2 will be implemented

**Stage 2:** If the issues persists and / or part of the Risk Register of KPIs is flagging a Yellow 2, the Director of Operations will meet with their respective staff (which may include the Headteacher/Head of School) and devise an **Improvement Plan** together. This will be similar to the Raising Achievement Plan if an educational issue, but this time school senior leadership will be included in that plan.

This will be **recorded in a letter by the DOO**.

The DOO will re-iterate what the deficit gap is and what needs to be done, by whom in what time frame and set a review date. Clear success criteria will be set by the DOO.

A successful outcome will be deemed when the RAG Rating for a specific category / category is rated **1/ Green**.

Should the outcome evidence little / no improvement, Stage 3 will be implemented.

**Stage 3:** If little or inadequate improvement progress is made and / or part of the Risk Register of KPIs is flagging an Amber 3, an official **Improvement Notice** will be issued by the Director of Learning to the Head of Teaching & Learning / Head of School to improve that area of educational weakness **OR** an official notice is issued by the Director of Operations to the Business Manager/Finance Manger or Head/Head of School to improve an area of business weakness. The Head/Executive Head should be made aware as should the LPB SSI committee.

This will be recorded in an **Improvement Notice letter** to the Headteacher / Executive Head.

The DOO will intervene directly to support improvement.

The DOO will state again what the deficit gap is at this point and what needs to be done, by whom in what time frame and set a review date. Clear success criteria will be set by the DOO.

The DOO *may* recommend to the Head / Executive Head that disciplinary or competency measures be taken involving staff involved in the under-achievement. If the Head or Executive Head is considered to be part of the issue the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive. The issue will be reported to the Trust SSI / FBS.

The DOO should take the issue to a Trust FBS or SSI scrutiny panel.

A successful outcome will be deemed when the RAG Rating for a specific category / categories is rated **1/ Green**. If the outcome of the implementation of Stage 3 intervention is that a specific category / categories moves from a **3 / Amber** to a **2/ Yellow**, continued monitoring of this area will occur as set out in Intervention Stages 1 and 2, until a successful outcome of a **1/Green** RAG rating is achieved.

Should the outcome evidence little / no improvement, Stage 4 will be implemented

**Stage 4:** If the issue persists or a risk is judged to be substantial, or part of the Risk Register of KPIs is flagging a Red 4, an official notice will be issued by the Chief Executive to the Head Teacher / Executive Headteacher to improve the area of identified weakness.

The CE will issue a **Warning Notice** to the Head / Executive Head and copy that to the LPB Chair of Partners. The CE will report the issue to the Trust Board.

The CE will liaise with the DOO and decide on the form of direct involvement to take. This will directly affect aspects of the Delegation Matrix which are relevant to the issue and as such delegation for that area of responsibility *may* temporary be suspended.

If the issue relates to business/finance the DOO in consultation with the Chief Executive may consider transferring the management of the school's budget to the Executive Team.

The CE/DOO will inform SSI/FBS who will discuss the issue and discuss temporary suspension of part of the Delegation Matrix. SSI/FBS may also decide to issue its own Warning Letter.

The Trust RSA committee will be made aware immediately of the issue.

The CE with the DOO will draw up a **Stage 4 Plan of Action** for improvement, which will involve the Head/Executive Head and relevant LPB Partners (as well as Central Staff).

The Trust Board / Committee may decide that a *Centre Action Plan* is needed if the trigger points warrant which will be monitored by the CE, DOO and Trust Board / Committee.

A *Core Group* of school improvement personnel will convene if the Trust feel that the school is at significant risk of not achieving a Good grade in their next Ofsted inspection. The core group will consist of external school improvement partners, the CE, DOO, a Trustee & the school Head / Executive Head.

A successful outcome will be deemed when the RAG Rating for a specific category / categories is rated **1/ Green**. If the outcome of the implementation of Stage 4 intervention is that a specific category / categories moves from a **4 / Red** to a **3/ Amber**, continued monitoring of this area will occur as set out in Intervention Stages 1,2 and 3, until a successful outcome of a **1/Green** RAG rating is achieved.

Should the outcome evidence little / no improvement, Stage 5 will be implemented

#### **Stage 5:**

The Trust Board will take direct action.

If the Board considers that there is systemic failure they will consider:

1. Directing the Chief Executive to take over the running of a school
2. Disbanding the Local Partnership Board and replacing with an Interim Executive Board.

If there is an immediate high-level risk that has presented itself the Chief Executive should call a rapid response meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee.

#### **The Trust Board may also intervene by:**

- ✓ Commissioning National Leaders of Governance to support an LPB
- ✓ Withdrawing delegated powers from an LPB
- ✓ Removing or appointing new members to a LPB
- ✓ Disbanding a LPB and reverting its roles & duties to the Trust Board
- ✓ Closer scrutiny of the school's performance by the Board at each meeting
- ✓ Requiring the CE to demonstrate that the Head / Executive Head of the school is being effectively held to account
- ✓ Requiring the Head / Executive Head of the school to demonstrate that its staff are being properly held to account



### Appendix 3

#### Wessex Learning Trust Key Performance Indicator Categories

<b>Risk Register and RAG Rating System</b>	
<b>Quality of Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overall school performance progress measures / data capture progress v FFT 20 targets</li> <li>2. SEND progress against targets</li> <li>3. Pupil Premium progress against targets</li> <li>4. Key sub group progress against targets, especially if identified in SEF &amp; AIP</li> <li>5. Attendance % (against targets)</li> <li>6. Inclusion / Exclusion % (against targets) / behaviour indicators (house points etc), sub group analysis</li> <li>7. Subjects/themes on Raising Achievement Plans (RAP) and progress being made</li> <li>8. SIP Reports and School Improvement Team Visits, quality of teaching &amp; any moderation reports</li> <li>9. Participation in enrichment and extended school activities</li> <li>10. Effectiveness in promoting diversity, delivering SRE and SMSC</li> </ol>
<b>Finance Ratios</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staffing. Teaching staff: total income, educational support: total income, premises: total income, administration: total income, agency/supply: total income, other: total income</li> <li>2. Other Expenditure. Maintenance of premises: total income, other occupational costs: total income, educational supplies and services: total income, ICT Costs: total income, staff development: total income, Indirect Employees Expenses: total income</li> </ol>
<b>Leadership</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exec/Head/Head of School, Senior leadership and Middle leadership behaviours &amp; performance, leadership of identified sub-units of the school such as Pre-School and Sixth Form and overall effectiveness in following Wessex policies standard operating procedures</li> <li>2. Effective self –evaluation (SEF) and making agreed progress with the Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) for school improvement and agility in structural reform</li> <li>3. Effective local governance, in line with Wessex policy and procedures</li> <li>4. Contribution to the Wessex family and partnership working</li> </ol>
<b>Human Resources</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff turnover %, staff attendance %</li> <li>2. Staff on capability and support plans</li> <li>3. Induction, probation, appraisal and continued professional learning effectiveness</li> <li>4. Effectiveness of recruitment and selection, including diversity</li> </ol>
<b>Ofsted &amp; SIAMS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ofsted and SIAMS ratings</li> <li>2. Effectiveness of delivering the Christian Distinctiveness &amp; Collective Worship (where appropriate)</li> <li>3. HMI Reports</li> </ol>
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adherence to Health and Safety regulations, accident reports, fire, water, buildings, electrical and site issues and developments</li> <li>2. Effectiveness of Safeguarding practices (including Protect)</li> <li>3. Effectiveness of GDPR practices (data breaches, FOI, Subject Access Requests)</li> <li>4. Effectiveness of Cyber security (prevention against malware, phishing, spamming, spoofing, spyware, trojans and viruses; stolen hardware, such as laptops or mobile devices; denial-of-service and distributed denial-of-service attacks; breaches of access, password sniffing, system infiltration; website defacement; web browser exploits, intellectual property (IP) theft)</li> <li>5. Racism, bullying, general complaints</li> </ol>



## **Appendix 4**

### **Policy for Engaging with the Trust School Improvement Team**

It is expected that schools within the Trust engage fully with the Trust's 'School Improvement Team' (SIT) and help contribute to its activities. Schools sign-up to the modus operandi as detailed below when they join the Trust.

#### **School Improvement Team Infrastructure**

- The *School Improvement Team* can be classified as follows:
  - ✓ Growing People – Growing Capacity – Talent Management
  - ✓ Wessex Associates, Lead Practitioners, School Leaders of Education, Directors of Subjects/ Phases (these people make up what is called *Wessex Partnership Working*)
  - ✓ Wessex Teaching & Learning core personnel and external advisors
  - ✓ Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)
  - ✓ Wessex Subject Strategy Groups (SSG)
  - ✓ Development of System Leaders
- The Trust SEND Lead and Inclusion Lead support the Trust's SIT & Wessex Partnership Working
- Teaching and learning support between schools is based on evidence-informed theory of action and evidence of impact (*Wessex Partnership Working*)
- The Trust's *Director of Learning (DOL)* line manages schools' teaching & learning system leads in a matrix format with that school's Head
- The DOL line manages the *Trust Data function*, to close the loop on school improvement
- All schools contribute to the School Improvement Team (SIT) and *Wessex Partnership Working*. The Team co-ordinates skills and talents from across the schools, sustaining high performance, reacting quickly to make rapid improvements. The Trust Management Team must have a strong understanding of where specific expertise exists & how it can be used to support schools, and develop system leaders
- The SIT creates the '*Wessex Offer*' based on the skill sets of staff across the Trust (see below)
- Schools need to support the Subject Strategy Groups (SSGs)
- The Trust Board SSI '*Teaching & Learning*' sub group helps drive school improvement
- The Trust adopts considered approaches to using system leaders and lead practitioners promoting knowledge transfer through coaching, modelling and enquiry led learning
- The Trust wants school leaders to have a clear understanding of their weaknesses and a plan for addressing them; that they are open to learning from and with others through *Wessex Partnership Working*
- Wessex uses recognised hubs of expertise (eg Teaching Schools, NLEs etc)

#### **Teaching, Learning & Assessment Activities**

Schools *participate* in *Wessex Partnership Working* to support shared professional learning and development through the following:

- ✓ Shared INSET days / sessions
- ✓ Subject Strategy Groups
- ✓ Peer-to-Peer Coaching & reflections on classroom practice linked to the Trust's priorities
- ✓ Models of observation, development of practice and exposure to outstanding practice

- ✓ Augmentation of literacy & numeracy pathways 0-19, transition, assessment and tracking
- ✓ Augmentation of monitoring, data and research to inform teacher planning & differentiation
- ✓ Teacher-mentor programmes to promote sharing of expertise and ideas
- ✓ Learners engagement in lesson feedback and/or co-construction of the learning
- ✓ *Expert Working Groups* on effective transition (subject area/curriculum)
- ✓ *Skills to Learn* matrix using Griffiths, Burns, John Hattie and Dweck
- ✓ *Learner Ambassador Programmes*, (learning 'spies', literacy ambassadors etc)
- ✓ *Staff Voluntary Observation Schemes*, including cross-phase observations
- ✓ Schools follow the Trust's articulated approach to best practice. There are clear processes for realising the benefits of successful innovation in each school
- ✓ Schools agree that the priority is Quality First Teaching provision for all, consistency across schools, with clear expectations, pedagogy and assessment, closing the progress gaps for sub groups including most able, PP, G&T, CLA and boys
- ✓ Schools sign up for national & local updates via
- ✓ Schools use the Trust's expert coaching team to enhance leadership
- ✓ Wessex Leaders of Education (WLEs) will be developed in each school
- ✓ Action Research projects will be created predicated all staff training
- ✓ Behaviour Management, de-escalation and relationship building training will take place for staff
- ✓ SEND training will be in place for staff

### Centre of Excellence & Training Hub

The Trust has its own Teacher Training hub with the accreditation to deliver ITT, RQT and staff accredited training. Schools are asked to support this

- The training hub for the Trust facilitates PGCE students and is a Schools Direct hub,
- The training hub also supports NQTs across the Trust, provides school to school Support (eg STEM KS3-5, revised curriculum, NQT conference days, NQT mentor programme and training), Women in Senior Leadership, Headteacher support and continuous professional learning

### Wessex Leadership School

All Trust schools are asked to support and contribute to the Trust's Leadership School. The work here follows the *Wessex Leadership Qualities* Framework that is in place for Trust Staff. Activities include:

- Wessex Expert Senior Leadership training and coaching
- Wessex Expert SENCO leadership training and coaching
- Wessex Expert Curriculum leadership and coaching
- Wessex Expert Welfare leadership training and coaching
- Wessex Expert Middle Leadership leading to effective progress of learners
- Wessex Aspiring Senior leadership and Middle leadership training
- Trust Expert monitoring and self-evaluation which informs QFT, governance, SEF and being Ofsted-ready
- Trust Expert Team for Teaching & Learning Leaders (coach/mentor)
- Future Leaders coaching

### Wessex Subject Strategy Groups (SSGs)

All Trust schools are asked to support and contribute to the SSGs

- Schools support the *Wessex Subject Strategy Groups* (SSGs) in each of the core subjects of Maths, English and Science and those in the Foundation subjects
- The Modern Foreign Languages Strategy Group will be overseen directly by the Director of Learning
- The groups will focus on a taxonomy of curriculum and skills that provides challenge, differentiation and enjoyment
- The groups will focus on sharing pedagogic practice, sharing what works for different sub groups of learners, sharing a common language of learning

- The groups will focus on sharing assessment practices, including assessment for learning and summative practices, ensuring that assessment is moderated, helpful and has a consistency across the Trust and is compatible with high-performing schools in other parts of the country
- Strategy groups will evaluate progress of learners in ability groupings
- Schools are asked to support the Trust Primary Strategy and the Trust Secondary Strategy. School-based research will take place to harvest current positions and seek ways forward

### **Wessex Hubs**

Schools are asked to support and contribute to the Trust Hubs, which are centres of excellence created in a number of key strategic areas, such as Modern Foreign Languages and Computing. Hubs will have a more linear form of line management / matrix leadership structures and will have additional support from the Trust

### **The Trust's School Improvement Offer**

The School Improvement Offer is comprised of core support from the Trust and its *School Improvement Team (SIT)* as detailed above, external support from our quality partners, professional guidance from 'Central' staff, peer to peer support from our Wessex Lead Practitioners and Wessex Associates. In addition to the above:

- Each First and Primary school will receive at least 3 full days / 6 half days of support from the Director of Learning plus additional visits from the Chief Executive
  - Each school will receive a termly visit from the Trust's external School Improvement Partner who will provide a note of visit
  - Each Secondary / Upper school will receive at least 6 half days of support from the Chief Executive
  - Each school will receive a visit from the Chief Executive and School Improvement Partner above these visits to conduct the Heads' appraisal
  - Each School/ Chair of LPB will receive a visit from the *Link Trustee* and/or CE to provide guidance
  - All Trust schools will contribute to the *Wessex Partnership Working* and give 3 days of Lead Practitioner time and negotiate Wessex Associate's time
  - All schools to benefit from the Subject Strategy Groups (SSGs)
  - All schools to benefit from access to the Leadership School
  - All schools to benefit from Wessex Leaders Networks (eg Senior Leaders, Heads)
  - All schools to benefit from the SEND group and Wessex SEND Leader
  - All schools to benefit from the Inclusion Group Wessex Inclusion Leader
- All schools to benefit from the Wessex Designated Safeguarding Lead Group (DSL Group)

### **Growing Capacity**

The Trust believes in sharing and distributing some of the Trust roles / Trust projects across schools and developing staff. Schools are asked to support and contribute to the Growing capacity strategy. Some of the groups that help create school improvement and leadership include:

- Trust Management Group (TMG) consisting of Heads and Trust executive staff
- Heads of Schools Group
- **Wessex Associates:** Staff who have small amounts of time to develop projects. No salary enhancements. Seed capital funding is available
- **Lead Practitioners,** lead people in specialist areas with some time release across the year. Lead Practitioners can be: Academic, Personal Potential / Character / Participation / Employability
- **Directors (of Subjects).** These will be major posts, shaping curriculum, pedagogy and assessment across schools, across phases
- **School Leaders of Education (SLEs)** The Trust will combine SLE work with the above school improvement structures

- **Incubator Schools** for certain projects. The Trust wants to grow specific Incubator Schools to develop innovative practice in designated theme or subject areas.

### **Trust Self -Evaluation and School Improvement Expectations (Pre-intervention)**

- The expectation is that Quality Assurance is effective in closing the improvement loop, not just as an activity for the sake of an activity, but improves learner progress and closes the gaps upwards on deficit areas needing improvement
- The Trust mantra of 'show me' is in place, rather than just 'tell me'
- When setting learner targets, progress levels are set in the top 20% nationally by the Trust
- The Trust Quality of Education Policy is the benchmark to evaluate against
- The Trust model of evaluation, which samples & surveys learners, staff & parents on the impact of delivery must be embedded in all schools in a systematic fashion & acted upon
- The Trust Evaluation of Continuous Professional Learning on learner outcomes must be actioned regularly
- The rich picture of subject level, sub group level and learner level data is fed into the self-evaluation programme by each school
- Performance conversations with staff focus on improvement and development and are informed by evidence in each school
- The Trust Management Group meet regularly with agenda items in-step with the rhythm of the school year. Agenda items systematically cover the different aspects of school performance & improvement
- Trust leaders visit schools and classrooms together so that they develop a shared picture of their schools and provide critical friend feedback
- Local Governing Boards and Trustees have a means of engagement in the peer review and joint learning process
- Schools accept other Trust staff and middle leaders to help solve problems using their expertise
- System leaders employ a range of techniques to gather parent and learner feedback and feed this back into the improvement loop and Team SEF
- All schools to be open to working regionally and nationally with a range of high performing schools. Schools to be open for Trust system leaders to visit schools (e.g. for joint learning walks, lesson observations) & develop a shared picture of their schools.
- All schools to contribute staff expertise to the wider Trust family to support school improvement
- At all levels, classroom, subject, theme, phase, and school, there is an effective use of the full range of data to identify issues regarding progress and to target interventions effectively
- A clear ethos of high expectations and school improvement permeates through all school, and Trust leaders
- Leaders in schools meet regularly and use a 'gardeners calendar' of natural occurring events/data capture to set agendas for meetings in advance
- Blink self-evaluation visits are in place for themes/subjects and are calendared in advance and include classroom staff and leaders as well as Headteachers. 360 degree evaluation takes place
- School / subject / theme review processes are constructed in each school and agreed with the DOL/DOO/CE. This may include external specialists and Trust School Improvement staff.
- The school and Team SEFs are place and are tools that are being used to raise progress and outcomes in a systematic way. SEFs feed into Annual Improvement Plans (AIP) which are a live document for school improvement
- Schools are expected to use Stakeholder feedback to improve learning
- The Local Partners' role is to be the critical friend in challenging the Executive/Head's monitoring and quality assurance of the AIP. The Executive / Head is expected to have the QA monitoring model which the LPB monitors and challenges
- Local Governance committees / functions (SSI and FBS) are expected to scrutinise data and challenge quality assurance. If a deeper dive is needed either committee may arrange a Scrutiny Panel consisting

of a couple of local Partners and the Head/Senior staff. This would normally take place during working hours.

- Job descriptions are standardised by the Trust and include clear accountability mechanisms
- National standards are evaluated against, including in the appraisal process (Teacher standards, Leadership standards, professional support staff standards etc)
- The CE will carry out *desk top data* evaluations after each data trawl
- The CE will carry out *desk top SEF and AIP action* evaluations termly
- A formal quality assurance or peer review model is in place in each school enabling school leaders to identify development needs through structured conversations with peers.
- The Trust will run its own Quality Assurance processes and calendar
- The CE will lead the direction of the *Wessex School Improvement Advisors* and other external advisors and follow up with action
- A *risk register of schools*, themes & subjects is held by the Chief Executive
- Trust behaviour & inclusion QA work is supported by the Wessex Inclusion Lead using national standards and Wessex policies
- Trust SEND QA work is supported by the Wessex SEND lead and will use the national framework and Wessex policies
- The Trust deploys a well thought out Data Strategy that gives the Trust and school leaders and staff access to data when they need it. Schools are expected to contribute to this. The Data Team creates an insights strategy that supports the curriculum & assessment function, supports the Trust SSI committee and allows leaders to routinely review performance against KPIs
- Data cycles are structured to inform timely conversations about the quality & improvement to lead to impact (data is shared widely across the Trust informing regular, honest conversations). Schools are expected to synchronise their data cycles to meet this need
- Schools are expected at all levels (school, classroom, subject, teacher, question) that there is effective use of the full range of data to identify issues regarding progress, including sub group analysis and that effective intervention is targeted and impacts
- The Trust expects that Local Governing Boards receive from their Heads / Executive Heads clear, focused overviews of performance data which they then use to explore and frame probing questions
- Performance & progress for each school will also be benchmarked against schools and MATs with similar characteristics
- School leaders are expected to evaluate *robustness* of data collected including creating Prediction Residuals over time



## **Terms of Reference Audit & Risk (AR) Committee**

### **1. Principal Function**

The Wessex Learning Trust Board of Trustees has resolved to establish an Audit & Risk Committee (AR) to advise the Board on matters relating to the Trust's overall strategy, governance, risk management and internal/external control systems.

The AR Committee is responsible for advising the Board on risk management issues, recommend the framework of risk limits and risk appetite to the Board and oversee the risk management arrangements of the Trust. It will ensure that policy and procedure is compliant with the Academy Trust Handbook, ESFA guidelines and the funding agreement:

- a. To identify, mitigate and manage risks of the Trust.
- b. To initiate and consider detailed planning associated with major strategic issues.
- c. To perform the function of the Trust's Audit Committee.
- d. The Committee is responsible to the Trust Board.
- e. The Committee's Terms of Reference are adopted by the Board and may only be amended with the approval of the Board.

The AR Committee will report its findings termly and annually to the Trust Board and the Accounting Officer as a critical element of the Trust's annual reporting requirements.

The AR Committee has no executive powers or operational responsibilities/duties.

The AR Committee is *not* responsible for monthly audit checks, quality assurance checks on core business service provision, formative checks on educational performance data or welfare provision. The AR Committee *is* responsible for risk assessing the strategic big picture overview on behalf of the Board.

### **2. Authority**

The AR Committee is a Committee of the Trust Board and is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board. It is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee, external audit, internal audit or other assurance provider. All employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

The AR Committee is authorised to obtain any outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary normally in consultation with the Chief Executive and/or the Trust Board.

### **3. Membership**

3.1 Standing members of the committee are:

- Chair of the Trust Board
- Vice Chair of the Trust Board, the
- Chair of School Standards and Improvement (SSI) Committee

- Chair of Finance and Human Resources (FBS) Committee
- Trust Chief Executive
- Trust Director of Operations

Also, to be agreed by Trustees:

- An external person (non-Trustee) with no links to the schools, to be appointed annually, to provide objective scrutiny and advice (non-voting)
- Two other Trustees may be appointed annually
- Two Co-opted members may be appointed for short term requirements (non-voting)

The Chair of the FBS committee nor the Chair of the SSI Committee shall serve as chair of the AR committee to ensure strategic objectivity.

The Chair of the AR Committee will not be the Chair of the Trust Board. The Chief may not act as Chair of the Committee. Any other employee of the Trust may also not act as Chair, other than in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Board. If the Chair and Vice Chair are absent from a meeting the Board shall choose another Board member to act as Chair for that meeting.

A quorum shall consist when three or more members of the committee are present.

The Board may not co-opt an employee of the Trust if the result would be that the number of Committee members who are employees of the Trust (including the Chief Executive) would exceed one third of the Committee. Co-opted members of the Committee will have full participation rights but not voting rights. Only Trustees have voting rights.

Staff employed by the Trust may be invited to attend the committee to provide information and participate in discussions but should not be members of the committee.

Any Trustee may attend a meeting of the AR committee, including those who are not members of the Committee.

#### **4. Main Duties**

##### *Risk assessment, audit and mitigation of:*

- Educational Outcomes
- General welfare: staff and students
- Safeguarding & child protection
- Christian Dimension (SIAMS)
- Ofsted gradings, HMI reports, DfE & RSC notifications
- Financial, ESFA
- Staffing, succession planning, employment disputes / HR issues
- Fraud & mismanagement of funds
- Premises, health & safety, compliance, insurance coverage, cybersecurity, DPR/Data
- Reputational
- Failures in governance including LPBs & management

##### *Strategy and risk assessment for:*

- Trust expansion or risk of not expanding including Hub structures
- Trust entrepreneurship and opportunity cost of non-entrepreneurial activity

## 5. Detailed Responsibilities

The AR Committee will:

- Establish a robust Risk Management policy & system including any liability cover.
- Oversee the Trust's risk register and conduct regular reviews of that register. This will involve regularly reviewing stress and scenario testing and reviewing key messages coming from SSI and FBS committees.
- Consider the output from deep dive reviews performed for key risks including an assessment of the appropriateness of mitigating actions to maintain risks within appetite
- Provide assurance to the Trust Board that risks are being adequately identified and managed.
- Take delegated responsibility on behalf of the Board for examining and reviewing all systems and methods of control, both educational and financial, including risk analysis and risk management and for ensuring the Trust is complying with the overall requirements for internal scrutiny, as specified in the Ofsted Inspection Framework, Church Of England Inspection Framework and Academy Trusts Handbook.
- Review reports on any material breaches of risk limits and note where these breaches are linked to policy gaps or lack of effective standard operating procedures. Assess the actual potential impact to learners or staff, assessing adequacy and timing of proposed actions. This may refer to staffing, compliance, safeguarding, finance etc.
- Review cybersecurity processes, data protection, GDPR compliance and disaster recovery.
- Review the Trust's Critical Incident Planning.
- Provide summary assessment on Trust or schools' self-evaluation responses if there is consistent failure to meet KPIs or if there is consistent non-compliance to Trust policies, standard operating procedures, legal obligations and such like. This will also include checking the risk-assessment of academic formative assessment against appropriate progress data sets and predicted grades.
- Prepare and maintain the Trust's growth plan considering short, medium and long-term objectives which are costed.
- Ensure that adequate due diligence and assessment has been performed in the consideration of new schools joining the Trust.
- Ensure that new schools joining the Trust have an adequate induction programme and that there is a risk management of new governance, finance, operating systems and educational progress monitoring.
- Have a high-level strategic oversight of physical resource planning and facilities management.
- Advise Trust Members on the appointment, reappointment, dismissal and remuneration of auditors (both external auditors and internal audit).
- Agree an annual programme of scrutiny with the Trust's auditors for checking financial systems, controls, transactions and risks. Monitor the effectiveness of these auditors and review the findings and agree any action plan arising from it.
- Advise Trustees on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Academy Trust's systems of internal control and governance processes, including local governance procedures & impact.
- Consider the appropriateness of executive action following external scrutiny reviews of the Trust and to advise senior leadership on any additional or alternative steps to be taken.
- Promote **fraud prevention** ensuring that there are opportunities throughout the Trust for employees to act as 'whistleblowers' and report improprieties and abuses.
- Evaluate the Trust's reputational value (expectations, perceptions, community & business

relationships, outcomes for learners) and propose possible PR and marketing strategies for further improvement and improved value proposition.

- Encapsulating the above responsibilities, review the overall Business Continuity Plan (BCP). Ensure that there is a framework and holistic management process for building resilience and capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of the Trust's key stakeholders, its reputation and its brand value as a high-quality educational trust. Ensure that the BCP scopes out possible disaster scenarios (such as terror attack, fire, flood, natural disasters, disease & mass illness, utility supply interruption and other possible major interruptions) and contains a business impact analysis for such events (on site or on trips and visits), strategy selection options, disaster recovery solutions and the 'plan, test and maintenance' schedule of this BCP.
- Provide minutes of all Audit Committee meetings for review at board meetings.

## **6. Administration**

The AR Committee will meet times per year. The Committee's Chair may call additional meetings within reason if there is a specific need.

Decisions to be made at meetings of the Committee shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present and voting. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote. Only Trustees have voting rights on the Committee.

Administrative support will be provided by the Trust Governance Professional.

Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of the RSA Committee (based on, but not limited to, a pre-agreed annual schedule of activity) and papers will be circulated to members and attendees at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.

Minutes of meetings will be taken and submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Board once approved in draft by the Chair of the Committee.

The AR Committee will self-assess its performance against these Terms of Reference on an annual basis and will also review the Terms of Reference, submitting any proposed changes to the Board for approval.

The members of the Committee shall hold office from the date of their appointment until their resignation or to the end of the academic year (whichever shall happen first).



## Standards and School Improvement Committee Terms of Reference

Date approved by Trust Board: 25/09/2025	Date approved by SSI Committee: 11/09/2025
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### Purpose

The Standards and School Improvement (SSI) Committee serves to oversee the quality of education, and the educational experience, offered through schools within Wessex Learning Trust. It strives to raise standards for all children, including those with additional needs, and to ensure that the experience of school allows all children to thrive and grow into responsible citizens.

The SSI Committee works on behalf of the Wessex Learning Trust Board of Trustees and advises the Board on issues relating to school standards.

### Scope of work

The committee will receive regular reports on pupil performance produced by:

- Director of Primary Education
- Director of Secondary Education
- Director of SEND
- Safeguarding and Learner Welfare Manager

In addition, the committee is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee of the Trust to assist with the above monitoring, and all employees are directed to co-operate with any such request made by the committee.

Professionals invited to table a report at the SSI Committee meeting should be available to speak to their report and take questions from the committee during the meeting.

The committee will receive headline data that has been scrutinised through:

- Primary, EYFS and Pre-school Scrutiny Panel
- Secondary Scrutiny Panel
- SEND, Inclusion and Learner Welfare Panel

To monitor:

- Quality of curriculum
- Action plans put into place to raise standards
- The experience of SEND pupils
- Pupil attendance
- Pupil suspensions and exclusion
- Admissions

- Employability
- Wraparound and extracurricular provision

The committee is responsible for making the Audit and Risk Committee aware of any particular risks it identifies in any of the above areas, and for those to be added to the Trust's risk register.

### Membership

- The SSI Committee will consist of a minimum of five members of the Trust Board, to be appointed annually at the first Trust Board meeting of each academic year.
- The Chief Executive will be an ex-officio member of the committee.
- The Chair of Trustees may be an ex-officio member of the committee if they so choose.
- The Chair of the SSI Committee will be appointed by and from the Board annually.
- The clerk to the committee will be the Trust Governance Professional.
- The committee may by majority vote co-opt up to two additional members based on their expertise.
- The committee may not co-opt any employee of the Trust.

### Quorum

The quorum of the committee is three, of whom at least two must be Trustees (in the case of there being co-opted committee members present).

### Meetings

- The committee will meet at least three times per year. The Committee Chair may call any additional meetings they deem necessary.
- Agenda items will broadly follow a pre-agreed schedule of business, though additional items may be agreed by the Chair in advance of the meeting.
- Agenda and papers will be circulated by the Governance Professional to committee members and attendees at least seven working days in advance of the meeting.
- In the absence of the Chair, the committee shall choose an acting Chair for that meeting from among their number. The Chief Executive may not act as Chair.
- Co-opted committee members have voting rights, but no vote shall be taken at a meeting unless the majority of committee members present are Trustees.
- Decisions to be made at meetings shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- No more than 50% of those present at a meeting may be employees of the Trust.

### Policies

The committee will review and ratify the following policies:

- SEND Policy (Trust)
- Attendance Policy
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Relationship Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Virtual Learning Policy



## **Terms of Reference**

### **Finance and Business Services (FBS) Committee**

#### **1. Constitution and Responsibilities**

1.1 The Wessex Learning Trust Board of Directors has resolved to establish a Finance and Business Committee (FBS) to advise the Board on matters relating to the Trust's Finance, Human Resources, Premises, Building Projects, Central Services, and Business Enterprises, Health and Safety and GDPR.

1.2 To advise the Trust Board on all areas of governance and guide policy development in relation to: HR, Premises and Utilities, Accounting, Quality Marks, Charities Act and Companies Act, Policies and Procedures, Business Aims, Insurance Cover, ensuring that the Trust meets its objectives and any standards set.

1.3 To ensure that policy and procedure is compliant with the Academies Handbook, ESFA guidelines and the funding agreement:

- a. To monitor a three-year Business (Finance) Plan for the Trust.
- b. Consider and review detailed planning associated with major strategic issues.
- c. The Committee is responsible to the Trust Board.
- d. The Committee's Terms of Reference are adopted by the Board and may only be amended with the approval of the Board

#### **2. Authority**

2.1 The Committee is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board. It is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee of the Trust and all employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee

2.2 The Committee is authorised to obtain any outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary

#### **3. Main Duties**

3.1 To monitor and advise the Trust Board by written report each term on the following:

- a. Finance (but not audit)
- b. Human Resources
- c. Premises / Site Maintenance / Health & Safety & Safeguarding
- d. Capital Projects
- e. Central Services
- f. Trust Business Enterprises
- g. GDPR

3.2 To monitor and advise the Board on:

- a. Cash flow
- b. Changes in employment law & procedures

- c. Risk assessment of sites and compliance to various standards & laws.
- d. Opportunities for new build and substantial redevelopment.
- e. Effectiveness of central services and business systems.
- f. Opportunities for further revenue generation.

3.3 The Committee may use exception reporting in relation to receiving 'business' information to fulfil its detailed responsibilities. The Committee will receive a summary of positive performance to accompany exception reports.

3.4 Be aware of issues arising from other relevant committees and Local Partnership Boards including their minutes.

#### **4. Detailed Responsibilities**

##### 4.1 Finance.

- a. To have oversight of the financial planning and value for money arrangements;
- b. To recommend adoption of the Annual Income, Expenditure and Capital Budget and medium term financial forecast to the Trust.
- c. To request and receive reports on income and expenditure including major variations against approved budgets.
- d. To request and receive reports from other committees on any matter having a financial implication.
- e. To evaluate the Trust's procurement strategy and advise it on policy.
- f. To ensure all voluntary funds are properly administered and audited annually under the requirements of the Finance Handbook. Voluntary funds must be accounted for completely separately from any Trust funds and reported annually.
- g. Review benchmarking analysis on income & expenditure (against other Trusts & schools).
- h. To oversee the Trust's reserves including those of the schools and Kings Fitness and Leisure.

##### 4.2 Human Resources.

- a. To oversee the Trust's Human Resources strategy and practice including the monitoring of employment trends, including staff turnover, headcount, diversity, gender awareness, disciplinary cases, recruitment and retention issues and any Employment Tribunals.
- b. To receive information reports on organisational changes and to advise the Trust as appropriate of significant changes to management & leadership structures.
- c. To monitor staff pay settlements and receive confirmation from the senior leadership teams that pay agreements fall within the Trust's annual budget as recommended for approval by the Trust.
- d. To oversee employment policy including the consideration of changes to Trust employment policy, where new or substantial change is involved and to recommend for approval by the Trust.
- e. To review and set targets to link into annual budgets and KPIs, eg Complaints, staff retention, quality marks.
- f. Evaluate staff training & professional development provision.

##### 4.3 Premises / Site Maintenance / Health & Safety & Safeguarding.

- a. To consider strategic planning associated with major changes or development of Trust premises.
- b. To initiate and receive reports on the state of repair of the premises and planned maintenance within the allocated budget.
- c. Advise, make reports and recommendations to the Trust concerning any matters related to repair, maintenance and facilities management of Trust premises and to report to the Trust when funds are insufficient to maintain the Trust premises in a fit state of repair.
- d. To have oversight of the arrangements for safeguarding of Trust assets and to advise or make recommendations as appropriate.

#### 4.4 Capital Projects

- a. To review the building projects and bids of the Trust and ensure these are monitored in a timely fashion, with any issues of concerns brought to the attention of the Chief Executive the Director of Operations and, if relevant, the ESFA and its contractors.
- b. To review the Trust Premises Plan in light of possible new bids, identifying possible revenue sources and any needed matched funding.
- c. To review the allocation of SCA (School Capital Funding), ensuring that funds are allocated to need.

#### 4.5 Central Services

- a. To have a strategic overview of all support systems for the Trust.
- b. Evaluating the strategic ICT function and other technology in support of the Trust's business and educational commitments, including refresh plans for IT infrastructure.
- c. Evaluating the Marketing and PR strategy of the Trust and subsidiary businesses making recommendations.
- d. Evaluating the data function across the Trust.
- e. Evaluating other central services or possible central services such as Health & Safety, Site Maintenance, Governor Services, Catering.

#### 4.6 Business Enterprises.

- a. Review the performance and development of any Trust enterprise (such as Kings Fitness and Leisure, Pre-schools, catering etc).
- b. Ensure that there is a separation of risk from the core business of the Trust.
- c. Minimise the tax liability of Trust enterprises.

### **5. Administration**

5.1 The Finance and Business Services Committee will meet at least once per (old style) term. The Committee's Chair may call additional meetings.

5.2 The Finance and Business Committee will consist of a minimum of three members of the Board. Members of the Committee are appointed annually. The Chair of the Board may be an ex officio member of the Committee.

5.3 Additionally, up to two external co-opted members with particular expertise may be appointed to the Committee by the Board of Directors. The Board may not co-opt an employee of the Academy Trust if the result would be that the number of Committee members who are employees of the Trust (including the CEO) would exceed one third of the Committee. Co-opted members of the Committee will have full participation rights.

5.4 Other Board members shall also have right of attendance and may fully participate in meetings.

5.5 The CEO will be an ex officio member of the Finance & HR Committee as will the Director of Operations.

5.6 Other employees of the Trust's may be invited to attend meetings but will have no voting rights.

5.7 The Chair of the Finance and Business Committee will be appointed by and from the Board annually. The CEO or Head Teacher of an Academy may not act as Chair of the Committee. Any other employee of the Trust may also not act as Chair, other than in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Board. If the Chair is absent from a meeting the Board shall choose another Board member to act as Chair for that meeting

5.8 The Finance and Business Committee will be quorate if at least three members (or at least one third if greater) of those members eligible to vote are present. In addition, at least 50% of those members present are required to be Board members [in the event of there being co-optees on the Committee] and no more than 50% may be employees of the Trust.

5.9 Decisions to be made at meetings of the Committee shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present and voting. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

5.10 Administrative support will be provided by the Clerk to the Board.

5.11 Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of the FBS Committee (based on, but not limited to, a pre-agreed annual schedule of activity) and papers will be circulated to members and attendees at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.

5.12 Minutes of meetings will be taken and submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Board once approved in draft by the Chair of the Committee.

5.13 The Finance and Business Committee will self-assess its performance against these Terms of Reference on an annual basis and will also review the Terms of Reference, submitting any proposed changes to the Board for approval.

5.14 The members of the Committee shall hold office from the date of their appointment until their resignation or their omission from membership of the Committee on subsequent consideration by the Board (whichever shall happen first).



## Values and Ethos Committee Terms of Reference

Date approved by Trust Board: 12/11/2025	Date approved by VE Committee: 17/10/2025
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### Purpose

The Values and Ethos (VE) Committee serves to advise the Board on matters relating to the Trust's overall position in respect of upholding and supporting its vision and values throughout the Trust, i.e. its central team, its settings and its academies.

The VE Committee works collaboratively with the Diocesan Board of Education on behalf of the Wessex Learning Trust Board of Trustees to support the fulfilment of its core aims and statutory responsibilities for church schools.

The Trust is guided by its values that provide an overarching framework in which the culture of individual schools can also be expressed. These core values are representative of all faiths and applicable to all including those with no faith.

### Scope of work

To ensure:

- That the Trust's vision and values are upheld across its academies, settings, and central team.
- That Trust church schools are fulfilling their foundations as church schools and are enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- That Trust values, and the way they are demonstrated, secure positive evaluation, particularly through SIAMS, where appropriate.
- That the Trust establishes, maintains and develops a high-quality network and partnership between The Trust, its church and non-church schools, the diocese, the local parishes, and the wider community.
- That appropriate provision of chaplaincy is available for every school.
- Regular reinforcement of the significance of character education and how it relates to the Trust's vision and values.

The committee will receive regular reports on values and ethos produced by:

- Chief Executive
- Director of People and Culture
- Trust Christian Distinctiveness Lead

In addition, the committee is authorised to request any information it requires from any employee of the Trust to assist with the above monitoring, and all employees are directed to co-operate with any such request made by the committee.

To monitor:

- The contribution, challenge and support provided by the Trust that enhances the flourishing of adults and children.
- The pastoral care of children in Trust schools, including how church schools meet the needs of all learners through their distinctive Christian character.
- The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of Trust schools including the provision and impact of collective worship, ensuring that leaders are supported and trained in these areas.
- Curriculum advice and guidance, particularly within Religious Education.

The committee is responsible for making the Audit and Risk Committee aware of any particular risks it identifies in any of the above areas, and for those to be added to the Trust's risk register.

## Membership

- The VE Committee will consist of a minimum of five members of the Trust Board, to include two Foundation and two non-Foundation Trustees, to be appointed annually at the first Trust Board meeting of each academic year.
- The Chief Executive will be an ex-officio member of the committee.
- The Chair of the Standards and School Improvement (SSI) Committee will be an ex-officio member of the committee.
- The Chair of Trustees will be an ex-officio member of the committee, if they so choose.
- The Chair of the VE Committee will be appointed by and from the Board annually.
- The clerk to the committee will be the Trust Governance Professional.
- The committee may by majority vote co-opt up to two additional members based on their expertise. The committee may not co-opt any employee of the Trust.
- Co-opted members of the committee will have full participation rights, but no voting rights.

## Quorum

The quorum of the committee is two, of whom at least one must be a Trustee (in the case of there being co-opted committee members present).

## Meetings

- Any Trustee may attend any meeting of the Values and Ethos Committee, including those who are not members of the committee.
- The committee will meet at least three times per year. The Committee Chair may call any additional meetings they deem necessary.
- Agenda items will broadly follow a pre-agreed schedule of business, though additional items may be agreed by the Chair in advance of the meeting.
- Agenda and papers will be circulated by the Governance Professional to committee members and attendees at least seven working days in advance of the meeting.
- In the absence of the Chair, the committee shall choose an acting Chair for that meeting from among their number. The Chief Executive may not act as Chair.
- The Chair of the SSI Committee may not act as Chair.
- Decisions to be made at meetings shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- No more than 50% of those present at a meeting may be employees of the Trust.

## Policies

The committee will review and ratify the following policies:

- *None*



## **Terms of Reference**

### **Local Partnership Boards (LPB)**

Date valid from: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

#### **1. These Terms of Reference**

- 1.1 These terms of reference are drafted and maintained by the Wessex Learning Trust (known as ‘the Trust’). The Trustees may make amendments to these terms of reference from time to time.
- 1.2 In the event that amendments are made, the Trust Governance Professional shall notify the LPB Clerks and Chairs of each Local Partnership Board, who shall be expected to make other Partners aware of such changes.
- 1.3 The language used is specific: The term ‘Trust’ is to be used rather than ‘Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)’. The term ‘Trustee’ is to be used rather than ‘Director’. The term ‘Local Partnership Board’ is to be used rather than ‘Governing Body’. The term ‘Local Partner’ is important as all volunteers who serve on Local Partnership Boards are considered partners of the Wessex Trust Board. All schools are ‘Wessex’. All Partners are considered to be ‘Wessex’.
- 1.4 The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) acts as senior civil servants for the Trust Board to deliver the values and mission of the Trust and as such are directly accountable to the Trustees.
- 1.5 These terms of reference are derived from the Trust’s Scheme of Governance and in particular Part 2, Delegation Matrix. The Scheme of Governance should be referred to and remains the primary document.

#### **2. The Trust and Local Partnership Boards (LPBs)**

- 2.1 The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It has entered into a Master Funding Agreement with the Department for Education. It is the Trust that is ultimately responsible to the Department for Education pursuant to the Funding Agreements, subject to good outcomes for the schools within the Trust.
- 2.2 A Local Partnership Board acts as the checks and balances for a school(s) on behalf of the Trust Board and Executive Leadership Team. Many of the previous functions of a governing board are now either carried out by the Trust Board, Executive Leadership Team or wider Central Team. However Local Partnership Boards, which replace local governing bodies, are very important in maintaining the local ethos of a school(s) and providing those checks and balances on the ground.
- 2.3 The primary focus of the LPB is to ensure high quality education and learner development for all pupils at that school(s). This must remain at the forefront of everything that the Local Partnership Board undertakes.

- 2.4 The Trustees are the charity and are responsible for the strategic direction, general control and management of the administration of the Trust in accordance with the provisions set out in the Articles of Association of the Trust.
- 2.5 The Trustees have agreed a Scheme of Governance (SoG) that defines the responsibilities of the Trust Board and those that have been delegated by the Trustees to Local Partnership Boards. This scheme is reviewed annually or more frequently if needed due to the changing nature of school trusts and the national policy it needs to adhere to.
- 2.6 The Trustees hold the right to amend the SoG and/or withdraw delegated responsibilities if a Local Partnership Board is seen to under-perform for its learners, has Safeguarding issues beyond those that are reasonably expected, has major human resource issues, becomes non-compliant with Trust policies or legal frameworks, becomes financially unstable or goes against Trust values and ethos. The Trust Board may also decide to review Local Partnership Board leadership and remove / appoint Local Partners directly to improve local governance in such situations.
- 2.7 The Local Partnership Board is a committee *of the* Trustees.
- 2.8 Each school must be rooted in its own community. Local Partnership Boards are an important factor in ensuring that there is a strong connection with that community. The Trustees expect that Local Partnership Boards develop and maintain their specific ethos of their school, within the overall parameters of the Trust.
- 2.8 Two to three of the Local Partnership Board, along with two representatives from the Executive Leadership Team (and possibly a Trustee) shall meet twice a year to share feedback on the performance of the school(s) and to go through school evaluations and KPIs. This is to enhance communication between the Local Partnership Board and the Executive Team. This will allow the Wessex Central Team to bespoke support packages for the school and to showcase the great activities and learning from the school(s). This will also help keep Trustees connected with the schools in Wessex and Local Partners connected with the wider Trust. A Management Information Pack (MIP) will be provided electronically to Local Partners three times a year showing key data for that school(s).
- 2.9 Each school must be rooted in its own community. Local Partnership Boards are an important factor in ensuring that there is a strong connection with that community. The Trustees expect that Partnership Boards develop and maintain their specific ethos of their school, within the overall parameters of the Trust.
- 2.10 The Chair of each Local Partnership Board is invited to sit on the Trust's Chairs of Local Partnership Boards Group (CoLPB), which meets three times a year. This is a consultative body and provides representation for LPBs / schools.
- 2.11 All Local Partners are invited to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Trust.
- 2.12 Local Partnership Boards are reminded that the appointment of the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher and Senior Staff are the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the Trust Board.
- 2.13 The Trust Board reserves the right to re-organise the structure of Local Partnership Boards across the Trust, especially in light of leadership re-structuring such as executive headships across multiple schools or in light of national or regional directives that demands a different local structure. The evolution of the Trust along with national changes in policy demands flexibility of structure to meet the needs of the organisation as a whole.

- 2.14 The Trust Board reserves the right of attendance of any Trustee at any Local Partnership Board meeting. The visiting Trustee(s) will make every attempt to notify the Chair or Clerk in advance.
- 2.15 A Trustee has the right to speak at a Local Partnership Board meeting, either to feedback from the Trust Board, to clarify and answer questions from the Local Partnership Board or to make a challenge to the Local Partnership Board.
- 2.16 The Trust will provide training opportunities for Local Partnership Boards and a reasonable level of attendance is appreciated.
- 2.17 New Chairs of Local Partnership Boards will be supported by a mentor from the Trust (eg an experienced Chair of a Local Partnership Board or an Executive Leader).
- 2.18 A Local Partner may not also be a Member of the Trust Board or a Trustee of the Wessex Learning Trust, other than if they are co-opted to a specific Committee due to particular expertise.

### **3. Scope of Local Partnership Boards**

- 3.1 The Trust Board is the governing body of the Trust. The Trust is one legal entity, which includes all of the schools that are in the Wessex Learning Trust. The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Trust. They direct the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), as the executive directors, to carry out the decisions made by Trustees as well as to hold school leaders and Local Partners to account for the performance of their schools.
- 3.2 Local Partnership Boards are not governing bodies but assist the Trust Board and Executive Leaders to ensure that young people get the very best education. The Scheme of Delegation is the key document that outlines the tasks and relationships expected in 'governance' within the Trust; of the Trust Board, the Executive and of Local Partnership Boards. The scope of a Local Partnership Board of a school deemed by the Trust Board to be 'good or better' in summary, is as follows:
- 3.3 To uphold and demonstrate the vision and values of the Trust focusing on the agreed priorities of a school(s) and Trust, as laid out by the Executive Leadership Team on behalf of them and then leaving operational matters to the Executive Head/Headteacher in partnership with the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team.
- 3.4 To welcome Trustees, the Chief Executive and members of Executive Leadership Team (ELT), to LPB meetings as appropriate.
- 3.5 To assist with holding the Executive / Headteacher to account, in partnership with members of ELT and the Chief Executive, for the performance of their school(s), including academic progress, personal development and safeguarding.
- 3.6 To assist with the monitoring of the school's key performance indicators, under the leadership of the Chief Executive, ELT and Executive /Headteacher, especially those referring to the progress and outcomes of pupils and those included in the OfSTED framework.
- 3.7 To engage with implementation and application of Trust-wide policies.
- 3.8 To keep under review all aspects of the school's impact and provide challenge as appropriate in partnership with the Chief Executive and ELT.
- 3.9 LPBs of 'schools that are causing concern' may have amendments to their LPB membership and terms of reference according to their circumstances and requirements. Where the performance of

the school or LPB is deemed to be causing concern, the Trust Board may intervene through a range of responses including the taking control of an LPB. The LPB is therefore expected to understand that intervention by the Board may be necessary in line with the Trust's policy for intervention in schools causing concern as set out in Part 3 of the Scheme of Governance.

- 3.10 The Trust Board determines how schools are to be funded and if / what budgets are delegated. The Local Partnership Board needs to approve the budget to be set (from the delegated funds from Central), including an annual and a 3-year budget. This is to be submitted to the Trustees for approval and, the school budget shall not be effective until such times it has been approved by the Trustees.
- 3.11 The Local Partnership Board is required to work to cash limits as may be determined by the Central Team and based on the approved budget. Under no circumstances has the Local Partnership Board the authority to borrow money. Except where prior permission has been obtained from the Trustees, the school budget is to be prepared to show break even or better.
- 3.12 The Partnership Boards shall keep proper financial records using the Trust's financial/accounting software. Monthly income and expenditure reports are to be prepared comparing actual expenditure against the agreed budget. Variances over 5% are to be explained and clarified.

#### **4.Role of Local Partnership Boards**

- 4.1 The Local Partnership Board has a number of roles and responsibilities, aligned with the Trust's Scheme of Governance and the role of the Trust Board. It plays a vital role in the 'checks and balances' of school leadership, in partnership with the Trust Board, Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team and Executive Head/Headteacher.
- 4.2 Its core purpose is to gain assurance that the **primary objective of the school(s) is being secured, that learners are making good or better progress and achieving good or better personal development.**

*Supplementary objectives are:*To assist with ensuring that the Executive Head/Headteacher has created a culture that sets high expectations and enables learners and staff to excel

- 4.3 To assist with the support and challenge of all staff to perform effectively/efficiently and in the best interests of the school(s), parents and local community
- 4.4 To assist with ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced with spiritual, moral, social and cultural content including Christian distinctiveness as appropriate.
- 4.5 To assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the school's key performance indicators (KPIs), the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the progress and outcomes of learners
- 4.6 To assist with all reviews and take note of resulting reports especially those from the Chief Executive and ELT, Executive / Headteacher, Auditors, OfSTED, HMI, SIAMS and School Improvement Partners (SIPs)

To assist with holding the Executive / Headteacher to account for performance through a series of Local Partnership Board meetings, Executive/Headteacher reports, Partner visit days, evaluating the risk register and 'Heat Maps' (from the ELT) and involvement in the annual appraisal process

#### **Partnership Board Constitution**

- 5.1 The Local Partnership Board is a committee of the Trust Board and has no committees. It has

between 5 and 10 members including the Executive /Headteacher. Heads of School / Senior Staff are not Local Partners but should be encouraged to participate in meetings where appropriate and be 'in attendance'.

- 5.2 The Trust Board appoints local Partners to Local Partnership Boards. They are appointed on the basis of a skills audit but are not expected to run the school but instead be the checks and balances on behalf of the Trust Board and Executive Team, leaving day to day operational matters to the Executive/Headteacher.
- 5.3 Local Partners may not serve as either Trustees or Members within the Trust and must annually sign the Wessex Code of Conduct.
- 5.4 The Chair and Vice Chair of a Local Partnership Board are selected by the Trust Board as a result of an application being made and due attention being paid to the skills audit. These people will already be a member of that Local Partnership Board. Changes to Chair and Vice Chair 'mid-year' must be agreed by the Trust Board.
- 5.5 If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from any meeting of the Local Partnership Board a Trust Board member or an Executive Leadership Team member may chair the meeting, if a suitable Local Partner is unwilling to chair the meeting.
- 5.6 The Clerk to a Local Partnership Board must be agreed by the Governance Professional on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team, who will provide an up-to-date job description, person specification, pay grade and guidance on working hours and routines. The Clerk shall not be a Local Partner. Notwithstanding this, Local Partners may, where the Clerk fails to attend a meeting of theirs, appoint any one of their number or any other person to act as Clerk for the purposes of that meeting.
- 5.7 There should be two Parent Local Partners on the Local Partnership Board. This may lead to the need for the Local Partnership Board to form a selection process if there are more than 2 nominees. The Clerk will administer any selection process. Local Partners are strongly encouraged to seek out parents who have skill sets that will meet skills gaps on the Local Partnership Board. A Parent Local Partner must be a parent of a registered learner or at the school at the time when they are appointed. Parent Local Partners, as with any Local Partner, must adhere to the Wessex code of conduct, its values and its objectives. The Trust Board hold the right not to appoint any Local Partner to a Local Partnership Board. If the number of parents standing for the election for a Parent Local Partner vacancy is less than the number of vacancies, the number of Parent Local Partners required could be made up by Parent Local Partners appointed by the Trustees. A Parent Local Partner may also be a Diocesan appointment.
- 5.8 There are no staff Local Partners, with staff voice and wellbeing collected through other regular processes.
- 5.9 The membership shall reflect the Christian ethos of the school, where appropriate. However all Local Partners should be recruited on their skill set and the balance needed for the Local Partnership Board. There should be 25% Foundation (Church / Christian) representation on a Local Partnership Board, where that school is a VC Christian school or 50% where it is a VA School. Local Partners are strongly encouraged to seek out Foundation nominees who also have skill sets that will meet skills gaps on the Local Partnership Board. These Local Partners will be asked to perform other cabinet functions and not solely be 'Foundation'. All Local Partners who serve on Church school Local Partnership Boards are asked to be sympathetic to the Christian faith, its distinctiveness and values. The Trust Board may ask 'Foundation Partners' to contribute to the Trust's Ethos committee, which helps shape strategic vision and

operational delivery of its Christian ethos and distinctiveness. Foundation Local Partners must be agreed by the Diocese.

- 5.10 The Executive / Headteacher may be a Local Partner, or they can decline. They cannot be the Chair of their 'own' Local Partnership Board but can chair a different Local Partnership Board within Wessex. Senior staff, including those on SLT and Heads of School cannot be a Local Partner in their own school.
- 5.11 Every person on a Local Partnership Board is to be known as a 'Local Partner'. 'Parents' are Local Partners and represent the entirety of the school and will need to take a 'cabinet role' as will Foundation (church) Local Partners. All Local Partners are part of the Trust.
- 5.12 Local Partnership Boards are to allocate specific roles to Local Partners to ensure focus is maintained in key areas. Ideally a Local Partner with experience for the area should be used. More than one role can be assigned to a Partner. Roles include:
- Chair and Vice Chair (who may hold other roles too)
  - Raising Standards
  - Safeguarding
  - Pupil Premium
  - Special Educational Needs
  - Children Looked After
  - Reading and Phonics (Primary and First schools only)
  - Christian Ethos (Church Schools Only)
  - Additional roles can be allocated, such as Faculty/Subject leads or Health & Safety .
  - Cabinet roles could show agility from one year to the next depending on the needs of the school(s), such as Ofsted action plan targets, specific gaps in learner subgroups etc.
  - Partners are not expected to perform the role themselves. It is non-executive, eyes-on, handsoff.
- 5.13 Terms of office are for 4 years (except in the case of the Headteacher) with an annual review, unless exceptional circumstances apply e.g. prolonged absence from meetings, bankruptcy, criminality, disqualification as a charity trustee or 'bringing the Trust into disrepute' etc. Any Partner may seek re-appointed from the Trust Board for consecutive periods, which will be at the discretion of the Trust Board in consultation with the wider Local Partnership Board of that school(s). All Partner applications are subject to DBS clearance and all local Partners must undertake Safeguarding and Protect Training EACH year.
- 5.14 A Partner may at any time resign their office by giving notice of one month in writing to the Clerk to the Partnership Board.
- 5.15 The Trustees may terminate the appointment of any Partner whose presence or conduct is deemed by the Trustees not to be in the best interests of the Trust or the school. See Code of Conduct for Local Partners and Trustees.
- 5.16 It is currently scheduled to meet once per term (6 times per year) but smaller meetings during the school day may be necessary eg Leadership, SEND, Inclusion, Data etc. The Central Team will schedule the meeting windows in the calendar so that there is a synchronised approach with Trust Board meetings.
- 5.17 Meetings last a maximum of 2 hours, may start any time before 6.00 pm but not run after 8.00pm. The quorum for meetings is 50% including the Executive Head/Headteacher.
- 5.18 Meetings are focused on the quality of education provided and priorities/strategies for

improvement with particular use of data monitoring and other reports.

- 5.19 Progress data, in a consistent format appropriate to the phase, is shared with Local Partnership Boards who may be expected to make a short evaluative statement to the Trust Board if there are concerns.
- 5.20 Although the Executive Head / Headteacher's report may be an important part of the meeting, it is not to be discussed line-by-line nor tabled at the meeting.
- 5.21 Finance and other business services are not expected to be a substantive issue on the agenda since the Trust Board holds the Executive Leadership Team to account for budget expenditure. Some items may be taken 'off-line' and discussed with the Head and Operations person.
- 5.22 The Central Team will schedule set agenda items for each Local Partnership Board meeting. However, there will be time for other agenda items, which should focus on areas for school improvement, including progress on Ofsted and SIAMS action plans, progress on the AIP, progress on the KPIs, progress for SEND and vulnerable learners and scrutiny of action taken after a SIP or ELT report (the Executive Head/Head will produce an action plan after each Trust scrutiny event). Likewise Executive Heads/Heads are expected to set Senior Team meeting agendas that focus specifically on school improvement priorities which pick up evaluative points and actions from Partnership Board discussions as well as from the Trust's ELT.
- 5.23 An annual self-evaluation of the Local Partnership Board effectiveness and skills audit forms the basis of refreshing and reorganising future arrangements.
- 5.24 Minutes are to be up-loaded onto the Trust platform within 2 weeks of the meeting to ensure an on-going dialogue between the Executive Leadership Team, Trust Board and Local Partnership Board. Minutes need to be succinct, show clear and appropriate challenge to senior staff, show analysis not narrative and have clear and 'SMART' action points.

## **6. LPB Composition**

- 6.1 The Trust's Scheme of Governance outlines some of the process of appointing Partners: "Partners play a very important part in the governance of schools at a more finite, interactive and local level. They are appointed on the basis of a skills audit but are expected to remain strategic, gain assurance and leave operational matters to the Executive Head/Headteacher/Head of School.
- 6.2 Annually the skills audit of an LPB will be shared with the Trust Board. Local Partners may not also serve as either Trustees or Members within the Trust, other than if they are co-opted to a specific Committee due to particular expertise, and must annually sign the Wessex Code of Conduct.
- 6.3 The Chair of an LPB is selected by the Trust Board as a result of an application being made and due attention being paid to the skill audit. That person will already be a member of the LPB.
- 6.4 The Chair then assists the Trust Board with the appointment of other Partners after they have made applications. There should be a Vice Chair elected next. The total membership shall be not less than 6 and not more than 10 (unless the LPB represents a number of schools, in which case Trust Board permission is needed). The membership shall reflect the Christian ethos of the school, where appropriate, in its constituency. Apart from the 2 parent-elected Partners (and Foundation Partners for Church Schools) all other local Partners should be recruited on their skill set and balance needed for the LPB.

- 6.5 There are no staff Partners, with staff voice and wellbeing collected through other regular processes.
- 6.6 Applications are welcomed from people with a wide range of backgrounds:
- Adults with experience of governance and those with no experience at all.
  - Parents with children in the school or in other schools.
  - Staff working in other schools with good educational experience and skillset.
  - People with empathy for 'British values' and inclusive Christian faith.

Due attention to the skills and background mix remains a priority consideration, especially those relating to confidentiality, independence and objectivity.

- 6.7 There should be 25% Foundation (Church / Christian) representation on an LPB, where that school is a VC Christian school or 50% where it is a VA School. Partners are strongly encouraged to seek out Foundation nominees who also have skill sets that will meet skills gaps on the LPB. These Partners will be asked to perform other cabinet functions and not *solely* be 'Foundation'. All Partners who serve on Church school LPBs are asked to be sympathetic to the Christian faith, its distinctiveness and values. The Trust may ask 'Foundation Partners' to contribute to the Trust's Values & Ethos Committee, which helps shape the strategic vision and operational delivery of its Christian ethos and distinctiveness.
- 6.8 Foundation Partners must be approved by the Diocese.
- 6.9 There should be two parent Partners on the LPB. This may lead to the need for an election which should take place if there are more than 2 nominees. The Clerk will oversee any election process. Partners are strongly encouraged to seek out parents who have skill sets that will meet skills gaps on the LPB. A parent Partner must be a parent of a registered learner or at the school at the time when s/he is elected. Any election of the parent Partner which is contested shall be held by secret ballot.
- 6.10 If the number of parents standing for the election for a Parent Governor vacancy is less than the number of vacancies, the number of parent Partners required could be made up by parent Partners appointed by the Trustees.
- 6.11 The Executive / Headteacher may be a Local Partner, or they can decline. They cannot be the Chair of their 'own' LPB but can chair a different LPB within Wessex. Senior staff, including those on SLT and Heads of School cannot be a local governor.
- 6.12 Every person on an LPB is to be known as a 'Partner. Parents are Partners and represent the entirety of the school and will need to take a 'cabinet role' as will Foundation (church) nominees.
- 6.13 LPBs are to allocate specific roles to Local Partners to ensure focus is maintained in key areas. Ideally a Local Partner with experience for the area should be used. More than one role can be assigned to a Partner. Roles are to include:
- Chair and Vice Chair (who may hold other roles too)
  - Safeguarding
  - Health & Safety
  - Raising Standards
  - Pupil Premium/Vulnerable Learners
  - SEND
  - Children Looked After
  - Reading and Phonics (Primary and First schools only)
  - Christian Ethos (Church Schools Only)

- Additional roles can be allocated, such as Faculty/Subject leads

- 6.14 Terms of office are for 4 years (except in the case of the Headteacher) with an annual review, unless exceptional circumstances apply e.g. prolonged absence from meetings, bankruptcy, criminality, disqualification as a charity trustee under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 or 'bringing the Trust into disrepute' etc. Any Partner may seek re-appointment for consecutive periods, which will be at the discretion of the Trust Board in consultation with the wider LPB of that school(s).
- 6.15 All Local Partner applications are subject to DBS clearance and all Local Partners must undertake annual safeguarding training, which including FGM training, annually and Prevent training every three years.

## **7. Resignation & Removal of Partners**

- 7.1 A Partner may at any time resign her/his office by giving notice of one month in writing to the Clerk to the LPB.
- 7.2 The Trustees may terminate the appointment of any Partner whose presence or conduct is deemed by the Trustees not to be in the best interests of the Trust or the school. See Code of Conduct for Local Partners and Trustees.

## **8. Persons ineligible to be Partners**

- 8.1 No person shall be qualified to be a Local Partner unless s/he is aged 18 or over at the date of her/his election or appointment. No current pupil of the school shall be a Local Partner.
- 8.2 A Local Partner shall cease to hold office if s/he becomes incapable, by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury, of managing or administering her/his own affairs.
- 8.3 A Local Partner shall cease to hold office if s/he is absent without the permission of the Partners from all their meetings held within a period of twelve months and the Partners resolve that this office be vacated.
- 8.4 A Local Partner shall cease to hold office if s/he would be disqualified from acting as a charity trustee by virtue of section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).
- 8.5 A person shall be disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a Local Partner:
- 8.5.1 If her/his estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced.
- 8.5.2 If s/he is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order.
- 8.5.3 If at any time when s/he is included in the list of teachers and workers with children or young persons whose employment is prohibited or restricted under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999, OR if there are legitimate concerns that have arisen under the Safer Recruitment Process that has been followed as part of the Partner recruitment or election process.
- 8.5.4 If at any time s/he is disqualified from working with children under section 28, 29, 29A and 29B of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.
- 8.5.5 If s/he is a person in respect of whom a direction has been made under section 142 of the Education Act 2002.

8.5.6 Where s/he has, at any time, been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of any offence which falls under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993.

8.5.7 If s/he has not complied with the Trust's DBS policies. Local Partners are required to be familiar with the DBS policies and must act in compliance with them.

8.6 Where a person becomes disqualified from holding office as a local governor and s/he is serving on an LPB (or is proposed to become a local governor), s/he upon becoming disqualified must give written notice of that fact to the Clerk to the Local Governing Body. The Trust considers this as a most important part of its safeguarding and child protection duties.

## **9. Appointment of the Clerk to Partners**

9.1 The Clerk to Partners shall be appointed by the Local Partnership Board with agreement of the Central Team, under the Job Description, Person Specification and pay grade set by the Central Team. The Clerk shall not be a Local Partner. Notwithstanding this paragraph, Local Partners may, where the Clerk fails to attend a meeting of theirs, appoint any one of their number or any other person to act as Clerk for the purposes of that meeting.

## **10. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of LPB**

10.1 LPB's nominate their Chairs and Vice-Chairs in the summer term for the following academic year. The nomination of the Chair of the LPB will then need to go for approval to the Chair of the Trust Board and ratified at the earliest Trust Board Meeting. The Trust will issue the deadline each year.

10.2 Where the Trust consider that there is not a suitable Chair or Vice-Chair from among the local Partners, the Trust Board will seek to find a resolution.

10.3 If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from any meeting of the Local Partnership Board a Trust Board member or an Executive Leadership Team member shall Chair the meeting.

## **11. School Budget/Accounts**

11.1 The Trust Board determines how schools are to be funded and if budgets are delegated the Local Partnership Board needs to approve the budget to be set (from the delegated funds from Central), including an annual and a 3-year budget. This is to be submitted to the Trustees for approval and, the school budget shall not be effective until such time as it has been approved by the Trustees.

11.2 The Local Partnership Board is required to work to cash limits as may be determined by the Central Team and based on the approved budget. Under no circumstances has the Local Governing Body the authority to borrow money.

11.3 The most up to date Delegation Matrix (Part 2 of the Scheme of Governance) and the Trust's Finance Policy shall show the contracts that an academy may enter into, including staffing and procurement. Schools will be asked to adhere to a preferred suppliers list.

11.4 Except where prior permission has been obtained from the Trustees, the school budget is to be prepared to show break even or better.

11.5 The Local Governing Body shall keep proper financial records using the Trust's financial/accounting

software. Monthly income and expenditure reports are to be prepared comparing actual expenditure against the agreed budget. Variances over 5% are to be explained and clarified. The latest report is to be reviewed at the next LPB meeting.

## **12. Risk Management**

- 12.1 The Local Governing Body shall keep under review the school risk register and seek assurance that risk management is effective.
- 12.2 Local Partners are not, and nothing within this document is intended to make them charity trustees, within the terms of section 97(1) of the Charities Act 1993.
- 12.3 Each local governor shall act in the best interests of the Trust and school at all times.
- 12.4 The local Partners must keep confidential all information of a confidential nature obtained by them relating to the school and the Trust.
- 12.5 The Trustees reserve the right to withdraw delegated powers from the Local Governing Body and disband it at any time.
- 12.6 On his or her appointment, each local governor shall be required to signify that s/he is familiar and agrees to comply with:
  - The values and ethos of the Wessex Learning Trust
  - the Articles of Association
  - the Funding Agreements
  - these Terms of Reference
  - Safeguarding and Protect Procedures
  - the Partners, Trustees and Members Code of Conduct (SoG Part 3, Appendix 1) and
- 12.7 Each local governor shall also be required to carry out training to ensure their skills and knowledge are up to date at least once per year, including Safeguarding.
- 12.8 Each local governor is required to take part in self-review and is accountable for meeting his or her own training and development needs. It is a Partners responsibility to consider if, and raise any concerns where, he or she feels that appropriate training and development is not being provided.

## **13. Meetings of the Local Governing Body**

- 13.1 Local Partnership Boards meet 6 times a year, once per 'new' term, in the week stated by the Trust. Local Partners are reminded that the workload of Headteachers is heavy and that much of the workload that was once placed on LPBs has passed to the Trust Board and Executive Leaders. It is the intention of the Trust that the LPBs are mindful of this. There are no 'sub' committees but local Partners may schedule visits to the school during working hours to meet staff.
- 13.2 Meetings should start *no later* than 6pm and finish within two hours. Headteacher welfare is a major concern and the Trust has a duty of care to look after its school leaders. Partners are kindly reminded of this and of the fact that employers are often flexible in letting their employees attend civic duties such as school governance.
- 13.3 The Central Team will issue the meeting schedule for the following year at the end of the academic year. LPBs should note the dates and plan to hold their meetings to synchronize with this calendar. In the case of budget setting it is important that LPBs approve their budget before the budget meeting of the Trust Board is held. At the start of the academic year the Trust will issues the Annual Schedule of Business for the Trust and LPBs. This will aid LPBs in planning the content of the LPB

meetings.

- 13.4 LPBs may delegate a governor to agree a (local) school policy with the Headteacher outside of a formal governor meeting, as long as that policy is made available to all relevant Partners in advance for feedback to the delegated governor. Similarly, Partners may be delegated to meet with senior staff in school hours to carry out quality assurance visits and so forth, all of which removes the pressure on evening meetings for senior staff and Headteachers. To note: Central Trust policies supercede local school policies.
- 13.5 The Trust will monitor Headteacher and senior staff workload and welfare. It will intervene if it feels that the number and length and lateness of meetings is not in tune with the ethos of these terms of reference and this section.
- 13.6 All meetings shall be convened by the Clerk to the Local Governing Body, who shall send to the Partners written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The clerk will minute all official meetings and make those minutes available to the Central Team. The minutes of the meeting shall follow the Trust template. The action points of the minutes will be followed up in the next meeting by the Chair.
- 13.7 An extra-ordinary meeting of the Local Governing Body can be called by the Clerk if requested by the Chair or at the request in writing by any three local Partners, for urgent business. The Executive Assistant must be notified of this meeting so that Trustee agreement can be given for an additional meeting.
- 13.8 The convening of a meeting and the proceedings conducted shall not be invalidated by reason of any individual not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda.
- 13.9 The Trust Board, as the legal entity of the Wessex Learning Trust, reserve the right to over-turn a local governing body decision if it feels that it undermines the values, ethos, culture, accountability, core focus or consistency of approach of the Trust as a whole. Likewise, it reserves the right to do so if it feels that it is illegal, immoral or runs a reputational risk to the Trust.

#### **14. Quorum for Partners' Meetings**

- 14.1 Meetings of the Local Governing Body shall be quorate if 50% of members are present.
- 14.2 If the number of local Partners assembled for a meeting of the Local Governing Body does not constitute a quorum, the meeting can be held but key issues cannot be voted upon. If in the course of the meeting the number of local Partners present ceases to constitute a quorum, key votes cannot then take place. If a Trustee is present then they may count in the quorum.
- 14.3 If for lack of a quorum a meeting cannot be held or cannot continue, the Chair shall, if s/he thinks fit, determine the time and date at which a further meeting shall be held after agreement of the Trust's Executive Assistant, and shall direct the Clerk to convene the meeting accordingly.

#### **15. Proceedings of Partners' Meetings**

- 15.1 Governing Board meetings will be held on the week specified by the Central Team / Executive Assistant. This is to ensure a consistency and access to communication, across Wessex. This is a condition of the operation of an LPB. If it is impossible for an LPB to meet in the scheduled week, then permission must be sought to vary the date via the Executive Assistant.
- 15.2 Key decisions to be decided upon at a meeting of the Local Governing Body shall be determined by a

majority of the votes of the local Partners present and voting on the question. Every local governor shall have one vote. Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

- 15.3 A local governor may vote by proxy, if they can show that they an understanding of the issue(s) that they are voting on
- 15.4 No resolution of the Partners may be rescinded or varied at a subsequent meeting unless consideration of the rescission or variation is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.
- 15.5 Any local governor who is also an employee of the Trust shall withdraw from that part of any meeting of the Local Governing Body at which his/her remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement are to be considered.
- 15.6 A local governor shall be able to participate in meetings of the Governing Body by telephone or video conference, provided that s/he has given reasonable notice to the Clerk and that the Clerk has access to the appropriate equipment.

## **16. Minutes and Publication**

- 16.1 At every meeting of the LPB the minutes and actions of the last meeting shall be taken as the first agenda item after any apologies, except in particular exceptional cases where the local Partners present decide otherwise, and, if agreed to be accurate, shall be signed as a true record.
- 16.2 At schools which are Church of England, a prayer should normally be made at the beginning of the meeting by a Foundation Governor.
- 16.3 The Clerk to the LPB shall ensure that a copy of the agenda for every meeting of the Local Governing Board, the draft minutes of every such meeting (if they have been approved by the Chair of that meeting), the signed minutes of every such meeting and any report, document or other paper considered at any such meeting are, as soon as is reasonably practicable, made available to the Executive Assistant who will upload onto the Trustee's virtual area.

## **17. Delegation of Functions and Committees**

- 17.1 Subject to these terms of reference the Chair of the Local Governing Body shall have delegated powers to act on behalf of the Local Governing Body in between meetings where urgent action is needed and there is no time to call a meeting ("Urgent" is defined in the relevant legislation as delay being seriously detrimental to the interests of the school or an individual connected with the school).

## **18. Conflicts of Interest**

- 18.1 The income and property of the school must be applied solely towards the provision of the Objects as detailed in the Articles. The restrictions which apply to the Trustees with regard to having a Personal Financial Interest shall also apply to the local Partners.
- 18.2 All Partners shall complete a declaration of interests form on joining the Local Governing Body and at the start of each academic year. Local Partners must also sign, annually, the Partners Trustees and Members Code of Conduct (SoG Part 3, Appendix 1).
- 18.3 Any Governor who has any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest) which conflicts or may conflict with his duties as a local governor shall disclose

that fact to the Clerk as soon as s/he becomes aware of it and notify the Chair at the start of any meeting where that conflict relates to an agenda item. A local governor must absent themselves from any discussions of the Partners in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his/her duty to act solely in the interests of the school and any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest).

#### **19. Amendment of Terms of Reference**

- 19.1 This document shall be subject to review at least once ever twelve months.
- 19.2 Notwithstanding paragraph 18.1, as described in paragraph 2, this document may be modified or replaced by the Trustees.

#### **20. Copies of Terms of Reference**

- 20.1 A copy of this document shall be given to every local governor and shall be available for inspection upon request by members of staff during normal office hours at the offices of the school and the Trust.

#### **21. Effective Date**

- 21.1 These latest Terms of Reference shall come into effect at the date passed at the Trust Board, which will be published on these TOR.

### Summary of Abbreviations used in this Document

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AR	Audit & Risk Committee
CE	Chief Executive
CofE	Church of England
CoLPB	Chairs of Local Partnership Board
DBS	Disclosure and barring Service
DfE	Department for Education
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Leads
EM	Employability Co-ordinator
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
ESFA	Education Skills Funding Agency
FBS	Finance and Business Services Committee
ft	Full time
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
GP	Governance Professional
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITM	Information Technology Manager
HR	Human Resources
JD	Job Description
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LPB	Local Partnership Boards
MAT	Multi Academy Trust
NSC	North Somerset Council
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
pt	Part time
QA	Quality Assurance
RD	Regional Director
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
SCC	Somerset County Council
SIAMS	Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools
SIP	School Improvement Partner
SOD	Scheme of Delegation
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMSC	Spiritual moral, social and cultural development
SSI	Standards & School Improvement Committee
TAS	Team Around the School
TMG	Trust Management Group
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
VA or VC	Voluntary Aided / Voluntary Controlled
VE	Values and Ethos Committee
WCT	Wessex Central Team
WLT	Wessex Learning Trust

## **School Abbreviations**

AXB	Axbridge CofE First School Academy
BKP	Brent Knoll CofE Primary School
CFS	Cheddar First School
CRS	Crispin Academy
CPS	Croscombe Primary School
DRS	Draycott and Rodney Stoke CofE First School
EBF	East Brent CofE Academy
ELM	Elmhurst Junior School
FMS	Fairlands Middle School
HSM	Hugh Sexey CofE Middle School
KOW	Kings Academy
LYM	Lympsham CofE Academy
MAR	Mark First and Pre-School CofE Academy
NAI	Nailsea Secondary School
SAN	Sandford Primary School
SCI	St Cuthberts Infants School
SCJ	St Cuthberts Junior School
SFS	Shipham CofE First School
STO	Stoke St Michael Primary School
WEA	Weare Academy CofE First School
WFS	Wedmore First School Academy
WIN	Winscombe Primary School

## **List of ELT / Central Team Leaders**

CE	Chief Executive
DoP	Director of Primary and Deputy Chief Executive
DoO	Director of Operations
DoSE	Director of Secondary Education
DoSEND	Director of SEND
GP	Governance Professional
DoE	Director of Estates
DoF	Director of Finance
DoPC	Director of People and Culture
WSM	Welfare and Safeguarding Manager