Wembley Multi-Academy Trust
ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

EAST LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

NORTH BRENT SCHOOL

WEMBLEY MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' INFORMATION AND DUTIES







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Introduction to Governance for Trustees

The purpose of governance is to provide confident and strong strategic leadership which leads to robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

All Trust boards have three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

Principles and Personal Attributes

Trustees should fulfil their duties in line with the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles):

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

A Competency Framework for Trustees

Trustees will need to be familiar with the DfE 16 competencies underpinned by a foundation of important principles and personal attributes. The competencies are grouped under the headings of the 6 features of effective governance, which are set out in the Governance Handbook:

1. **Strategic leadership** that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
2. **Accountability** that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
3. **People** with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
4. **Structures** that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
5. **Compliance** with statutory and contractual requirements.
6. **Evaluation** to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.



Further Reading for Trustees

DfE's 'Competency framework for governance'	here
'Governance Handbook and Competency Framework'	here
'Multi-academy trusts: establishing and developing you trust'	here
'Understanding your data: a guide for school governors and academy trustees'	here
ESFA 'Academies Trust Handbook'	here
School Ofsted (on the Ofsted website)	here
Scheme of Delegation	provided separately

Main Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees manages the business of WMAT and may exercise all the powers of the Trust. Trustees have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Trust.
Trustees are expected to apply the highest standards of governance and take full ownership of their duties. They are both Charity Trustees and Company Directors of WMAT.

Under Charity Law, Trustees must:

- ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit;
- comply with the charity's governing document and the law;
- act in the charity's best interests;
- manage the charity's resources responsibly;
- act with reasonable care and skill; and
- ensure the charity is accountable.

Under Company Law, Directors must:

- promote the success of the company;
- exercise independent judgment;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

In addition to the Full BoT meetings, Committees meet to carry out specific functions of the Board. The Trust works through the following established Committees:

- Curriculum and Standards Committee
- Finance, Resources & Audit Committee
- Pay Committee
- Local Advisory Boards (LABs) – *non-executive bodies supporting the Trust Board*
- Ad hoc Committees: Admissions, Disciplinary, Complaints.

Trustee Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out the common understanding of broad principles by which the WMAT Trust Board operates. The key purpose of the Trust is to help each school provide the best possible education and opportunities for pupils. The central and common purpose of the Trust board is the education and welfare of its pupils. Trustees have a duty to establish the core strategic direction, hold leaders accountable and ensure effective and efficient financial management. Trustees have a responsibility for the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates. This means that they determine, monitor, and keep under review such issues. Trustees appoint the CEO to manage these responsibilities for them and should recognise that the CEO and Senior Management Team, are responsible for the implementation of policies, day-to-day management of the school. All Trustees are appointed with equal status on the Trust Board. As they share responsibility for the employment for all staff. Trustees should fulfill all reasonable expectations of a good employer. Trustees should consider carefully how their decisions might affect other schools within the local community. The Board should recognise that they are accountable for their decisions but are also accountable to the parents of the pupils attending MAT schools.

Trustees must uphold the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. Trustees have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times, as described in the Nolan seven principles of public life. The overall good of the MAT will always override the Trustees' personal feelings and individual concerns. Trustees have the following core strategic functions:

1. Establish the strategic direction, by:
    - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the MAT schools
    - Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets across all MAT schools
    - Meeting statutory duties (including safeguarding)
2. Ensure accountability, by:
    - Appointing the CEO and key MAT officers
    - Monitoring the educational performance of the MAT schools and progress towards agreed targets
    - Performance managing the CEO
    - Engaging with stakeholders
    - Contributing to school and monitoring self-evaluation across MAT schools
3. Oversee financial performance, by:
    - Setting the budget
    - Monitoring spending against the budget across MAT schools
    - Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
    - Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

Commitment

- Being a Trustee requires a commitment of significant amounts of time and energy. Individual Trustees should have regard to this when agreeing to serve.
- Trustees should involve themselves actively in the work of the Board and accept a fair share of responsibilities.
- Trustees should make full efforts to attend all meetings and where he/she cannot attend explain in advance the reasons for absence. Regular attendance at meetings of the Board is essential. Non-attendance can lead to disqualification.
- Trustees should seek and accept appropriate training and development through the attendance of courses and events.
- Trustees should visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the Headteachers and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust Board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), maintain the underlying responsibility as a Trustee.
- Trustees accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the Trust board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency, Trustees accept that information relating to Trustees will be collected and logged with the DfE and Companies House.

Relationships

- Trustees should operate as a team in which constructive working relationships lead to effective governance
- Trustees should express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Trustees and school stakeholders in and outside of meetings.
- Trustees should actively support and challenge the CEO.
- Trustees should support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- Trustees should be prepared to answer queries and take into account any concerns expressed, and acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- Trustees should develop effective working relationships with the CEO senior management team, teachers, staff, parent groups, and other relevant agencies, where appropriate.

Confidentiality

- The requirements of confidentiality cover all forms of verbal and written communication, including the various forms of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Trustee meetings are not open to the public. Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed. Trustees should observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of Trustee meetings and from their visits to school. How an individual Trustee votes should always be regarded as confidential.
- The minutes of any part of the meeting that are confidential should be kept separate. In the main confidential items will be those where the privacy of an individual needs to be respected.
- Trustees should observe complete confidentiality in all matters discussed at the Board, especially in relation to matters concerning staff or pupils, and also any other matters agreed by the Board.
- Trustees should ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- Trustees should exercise the highest degree of caution when involved in sensitive issues arising outside the Board that may have an impact on the work of the Board or the operation of the schools.

Data

- Trustees recognise that they have a duty to comply data protection processes as set out by the school.
- Documentation on GovernorHub is confidential and must not be shared.
- Communication should be exclusively on agreed email addresses.
- Trustees acknowledge they have a responsibility to use their best endeavours to keep data safe and to report any potential data breach via the Governance Professional, should they believe a breach has occurred.
- Trustees agree to delete any records held by them upon expiry or termination of their term.

Conflicts of Interest

- The Trust will publish on Trustees details in line with current legislation on the MATs website. Failure to reveal information to enable the MAT to fulfill their responsibilities may result in a breach of this Code and the statutory requirements.
- Trustees will declare any conflicts of interest, pecuniary or personal, in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Conduct

- Trustees should express their views openly within meetings but should ensure that they relate to matters proper for discussion by the Board.
- Trustees who wish to raise matters for discussion by the Board should make a request to the Chair for the item to be included on the next meeting's agenda. This should be done in advance of the agenda being prepared.
- Trustees have the right to request any matters discussed at meetings to be recorded in the minutes, subject to confidentiality.
- Trustees must accept corporate responsibility for all decisions taken by the Board.
- Apart from very specific instances in which the Chair has to act or take decisions on behalf of the Board, Trustees should recognise that they have no individual powers and should only speak or act on behalf of the Board when specifically authorised.
- Trustees should take every opportunity to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of Schools within the local community.

Ceasing to be a Trustee

- Trustees must understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Trustee leaves office.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If this Code has been breached, it will be raised with the Chair of Trustees and the Chair will initiate an investigation; the Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. Trustees must be clear that breaches of this Code of Conduct will not be tolerated.
- Should it be the Chair that has breached this code, another Board of Trustees member, such as the Vice Chair will initiate an investigation.

Trustee Job Description

Trustee responsibilities

The key purpose of the Trust body is to provide the best possible education and opportunities for pupils. Trustees do this by making decisions collectively by:

1. Setting the school's values, vision and strategic aims, which involves;
    - Agreeing plans and policies
    - Helping to set and maintain the broad framework within which the CEO and the staff should run the school
    - Making creative use of resources
2. Monitoring and evaluating staff and school performance by:
    - Acting as a critical friend to the CEO, to support and challenge him/her in managing the school.
    - Asking the CEO – and, where appropriate, school staff – challenging questions.
3. Ensuring that the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, to those who fund and maintain it, as well as to the staff it employs. When tricky issues arise, the accountability to what is best for the children overrides the other priorities.
4. Other duties include:
    - Completing safeguarding training as required by KCSiE.
    - Setting and monitoring the overall budget for the school.
    - Deciding on the staffing structure to ensure the national curriculum is taught effectively.
    - Setting targets for pupil achievement and attendance.
    - Publishing national test and exam results.
    - Comparing the performance of their school to similar schools.
    - Receiving information about the quality of teaching in the school.
    - Having a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns.
    - Ensuring health and safety issues are addressed.
    - Asking challenging questions.
    - Consulting the CEO and Board of Trustees when making decisions.
    - Developing delegated school policies and procedures.
    - Considering the repair and maintenance of school buildings.
    - Considering the use of school premises outside school hours.
    - Appointing Link Trustees to focus on key aspects of the school such as Special Education Needs and Disability, Safeguarding, Pupil Premium.

Trustee skills and experience:

- Trustees play a key strategic role and should be able to solve complex problems.
- Ability to work within a team or experience of governance in any sector.
- Trustees should be able to understand high levels of analysis of data and be able to support the school in its evaluation.
- Trustees should have a sound understanding of finances.
- Trustees should be able to have a sound understanding how to manage the performance of individuals and the organisation.
- Any knowledge of the local community, risk assessment, safeguarding, Special Education Needs, handling complaints, grievances or appeals, teaching & pedagogy, legal, procurement is particularly welcome.

As a Trustee you will be committed to:

- Raising aspirations, expectations and standards of achievement in the schools. Helping the school provide the best possible education for its pupils.
- Regularly attending and contributing to meetings and workings of the Trust Board. It is an expectation that Trustees will attend all meetings, save for unexpected/exceptional circumstances. Should this arise, apologies should be communicated to the Governance Professional and the Trust will consider whether to accept the apology.
- Promoting and supporting equal opportunities for all members of the school community.
- Serving for a period of up to four years.
- Focusing on a key aspect of the school such as the Link Trustee role. In the capacity of a Link Trustee, meet with the relevant Lead to develop their understanding of how their 'area' works within the school for the benefit of the pupils, and observe the school in action (such visits are not assessments, but observations).
- Undertaking training identified by the Trustees' skills audit and keep themselves up-to-date on educational matters.
- Providing objectivity in debate and decision-making.
- Holding the reputation of school at forefront of actions and behaving professionally.

Declarations of Interests

Declaring and avoiding conflicts of interest is a legal and moral responsibility that all governors and trustees have. These are reviewed annually kept up to date on the GovHub. Any change should be disclosed and communicated to the Trust.

In broad terms, a conflict of interests arises when the interests of a governor/trustee in a matter being considered by the governing board, **may affect, or be seen to affect, the ability of that governor/trustee to take decisions on the matter that are impartial and in the best interests of the school/trust**.

Conflicts of interest are not restricted to those things that governors and trustees declare on the register of interests that is published on their school's or academy's website (directorships, partnerships, employment, personal relationships, etc.).

Trustees, governors and senior staff of the Trust are also obliged to declare any potential conflicts of interest during meetings and there should be an opportunity for them to do this.

REGISTER OF BUSINESS & PERSONAL INTERESTS

The purpose of the Register is to ensure that Governors & Trustees who may potentially have a conflict of interest, notify these interests in advance of any decision being made.

It is important that Trustees, Governors and staff act and are seen to act impartially. Decisions must be taken and seen to be taken without any possibility of influence of external or personal interest.

A register of business interests must be maintained for governors, trustees and head teachers.

- This must be freely available for inspection by trustees, governors, staff and parents.
- The register must include all business interests of each member or of any immediate/close relative. This may include directorships, company secretary, share holdings, employee relationships and any other position where a person is actively involved in the running of a company's affairs, where the company has or may have a contractual relationship with the school.
- The register must include any holdings of shares or other securities in a company or other body with whom the school contracts or is considering contracting if greater than £25,000 or more than 1/100th of the nominal value of the issued share capital, whichever is less. The size and nature of the holding need not be declared – only the name of the company.
- The register must include all personal interests of each member or of any immediate/close relative. Personal interests are non-financial interests of yourself or an immediate or close relative that may conflict with the School's interests, e.g. if involved in an official capacity with an organisation, body, association or charity which has dealings with the school, or if an immediate/close relative works for or applies for a job at the school.

For the purpose of the register an immediate or close relative is defined as spouse, parent, sibling, son, daughter, partner or someone living in the same household.

Completion of this register does not remove the legal duty for trustees and governors to declare a personal or business interest in any item of business at a meeting, and for that individual to withdraw whilst the matter in question is considered as required by law.

This rule applies to all, however if this relates to the Clerk, he/she does not have to leave the room, but must remain silent. A teacher governor will not need to withdraw if a business interest is no greater than that of other teachers of the school.

Trustee Note of Visit to School

Trustees are expected to visit the schools regularly and report on their observations. This enables Trustees to understand the schools, develop areas of expertise and report to the Board. The following form for all Trustee Visits to support this process. **Visits must be arranged with the Headteacher of the school.**

TRUSTEE/GOVERNOR NOTE OF VISIT TO SCHOOL

PART 1: PLANNING THE VISIT	
Name and role of Trustee/Governor	
Name and role of staff member	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus – link visit theme	
Relevant school objective or area of focus *Area of the Ofsted framework*	

PART 2: DURING THE VISIT
What is the school doing within this area of focus?
Stakeholder views
How do you know the school's actions are having an impact?
What successes stood out and why? **Was any exemplary practice observed that you'd like to make Board members aware of?**

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT
Add any further evidence you'd like to see or review to help you make a better assessment of the impact.

Signed: …… Date: ……



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ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL





