



The
St Gregory the Great
Catholic Academy Trust

'Where love exists, it does great things'

Trust Committee Structure and Terms of Reference October 2023

Overall Role of Directors:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- **Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff**
- **Overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance**

Committee Structure and Terms of Reference

1. Finance & Resources Committee

Membership:

The committee shall be comprised of:-

- 2 or more directors (2 to be quorate)
- Up to 2 co-opted members with appropriate professional skills

Meetings may require the attendance of the CFO, CEO and other staff as required

- 1.1 The overall purpose of the Finance and Resources Committee is to work strategically to ensure due diligence and probity in matters of resourcing within SGtGCAT, including financial, HR and premises issues and ensure the efficient use of resources and financial accountability, having particular regard for the effective use of public funding and protection of the resources and estates of The Church;

1.2 Finance

- 1.2.1 To oversee compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook and review on an annual basis the Trust's Financial Policy and Procedures and their effective operation across all schools;
- 1.2.2 Initial review and recommendation to the Board of the annual budget (including individual academy budgets) and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- 1.2.3 Receive management accounts detailing overall actual expenditure and income against budget for the Trust, including a forecasted year-end projection and key financial indicators for each school;
- 1.2.4 To approve any financial improvement plans required to ensure the Trust's schools deliver outturns within the agreed budget;
- 1.2.5 Ensure the annual accounts are produced in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 1985, Charity Commission and ESFA guidance issued to academies;
- 1.2.6 To review the Trust's contracts register and authorising the award of all contracts with a value of £50,000 or over;
- 1.2.7 Approve any requests for the exemption from the Trust's tendering procedures;

- 1.2.8 To review bids from the Trust's schools on capital investment priorities and award allocations from the capital funding allocation received from ESFA;
- 1.2.9 To review the financial policies of the Trust and where necessary make recommendations to the Board;
- 1.2.10 To approve the write off of debts over £2500 and receiving an annual report from the trust accountant on any debts under £2500 that have been written off;
- 1.2.11 To approve the opening and closing of any bank accounts and authorised signatories;

1.3 Human Resources

- 1.3.1 To work strategically to ensure due diligence and probity in matters of staffing and people management.
- 1.3.2 To ensure all decisions relating to HR matters meet the legislative requirements around equality and diversity.
- 1.3.3 To delegate HR and staffing matters as appropriate and in-line with the scheme of delegation. Keep this delegation under review.
- 1.3.4 Set the staffing structure of the MAT, including salary gradings, TLR values, pay scales for teaching staff, pay scales for support staff and leadership pay ranges, with regard to Diocesan policy.
- 1.3.5 Review and agree all of the HR policies and procedures of the Trust including pay, appraisal, staff discipline, grievance, attendance, leave of absence, recruitment and selection, staff welfare, staffing reduction / redundancy etc. and ensure that these are communicated to all stakeholders.
- 1.3.6 To consider any secondment and early retirement requests in consultation with the relevant LGB
- 1.3.7 To consider and agree leadership job descriptions and person specifications for all posts across the Trust. To receive reports and monitor status of MAT-wide staffing issues.
- 1.3.8 Annually review the Individual School Range (ISR) in respect of leadership pay for all schools across the MAT.
- 1.3.9 To receive and consider recommendations for the CEO's movement along the pay spine with support from the external adviser.
- 1.3.10 To receive and consider recommendations for the Chief Operating Officer's movement along the pay spine with support from the CEO
- 1.3.11 To receive and consider recommendations for the Head Teacher's movement along the pay spine with support from the CEO and School Standards Officer.
- 1.3.12 To set the terms and conditions of service for staff within the national and locally agreed arrangements, having regard to any TUPE implications
- 1.3.13 In consultation with individual LGBs, oversee any process leading to staff reductions.
- 1.3.14 To consider work/life balance, working conditions and well-being, for all staff in the Trust along with the monitoring of absence levels

1.4 Estates

- 1.4.1 To oversee arrangements for managing the Trust's assets and estate, including an effective Estate Management Strategy linked to long term curriculum needs and the availability of capital investment;
- 1.4.2 Ensuring academies maintain their buildings and facilities to a good standard with regards to the safety of users at all times and effectively discharge all of their associated legal responsibilities;
- 1.4.3 Review annually the Trust's H&S Policy ensuring it meets all legislative requirements and propose any changes to the Board; and
- 1.4.4 Oversee Health and Safety issues to ensure compliance with policies and procedures and receive an annual summary of activity within the Trust with recommendations for action made to the Board as appropriate.
- 1.4.5 To review these functions annually and propose any amendments to the Board.
- 1.4.6 To prepare an annual report for submission to the Board on the work of the Committee including an opinion on the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements, internal controls and risk management systems;

2. Audit and Risk Committee

The overall purpose of the Audit Committee is to ensure that the trust's risk management, control and governance arrangements both financial and non-financial are adequate and effective and to bring any concerns to the attention of the board.

Membership:

The committee shall be comprised of:-

- 2 or more directors (2 to be quorate)
- Up to 2 co-opted members with appropriate professional skills

Meetings may require the attendance of the CFO, CEO and other staff as required

- 2.1 Review and where necessary to challenge the actions and judgements of Trust and School Governance and Management in relation to financial reporting, accounting policies and practices, budgets, unusual transactions, disclosures, adjustments resulting from audits and compliance with Statutory Duties;
- 2.2 Review and where necessary to challenge the actions and judgements of Trust and Academy Governance and Management in relation to non financial controls, reporting requirements of other aspects e.g. GDPR, HR issues and safeguarding.
- 2.3 Monitor and review the integrity of the Trust's internal financial controls, including procedures to detect and prevent fraud and impropriety and those to identify, assess and manage risks;
- 2.4 Direct the process of internal assurance through the commissioning of internal audits and to receive reports based upon these exercises;

- 2.5 Review the trust risk register and direct any remedial action to the appropriate committee or academy
- 2.6 Ensure that all policies are appropriate for the trust's needs and are operated correctly so as to minimise risk including compliance with ESFA procedures, Company and Charity Law;
- 2.7 Overseeing and reviewing business continuity plans setting out what the Trust would do to ensure its continued operations;
- 2.8 Ensure that all staffing appointments are carried out in line with the Trust recruitment policy and all declarations of interest are appropriately recorded and acted on;
- 2.9 Ensuring the Trust has adequate insurance cover in place to support all of its responsibilities and receive an annual report of activity;
- 2.10 Ensuring that the Trust's risks, both strategic and operational, are recorded and managed effectively and are subject to regular review;
- 2.11 To inform the governance statement that accompanies the Trust's annual accounts and, so far as is possible, provide assurance to the external auditors;
- 2.12 Recommend to the Board and members the appointment of the Trust's internal and external auditors;
- 2.13 Advising on the scope of assurance reviews and reviewing the reports of the Trust's appointed internal auditor on the effectiveness of financial procedures and internal controls;
- 2.14 Overseeing the effective implementation of any agreed recommendations from internal and external audit;
- 2.15 To review the Trust's draft annual accounts and management letter from the external auditor;
- 2.16 To annually review the Trust's Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy when adopted;
- 2.17 To have oversight and make recommendations on the investigation of any financial system failures, instances of fraud and corruption and any other financial irregularities, including the reporting to the ESFA of any losses in excess of £5,000;
- 2.18 To monitor the Trust's arrangements for securing value for money and ensuring regularity and propriety;
- 2.19 To annually review the effectiveness of the Trusts corporate governance arrangements, internal controls and risk management systems including the register of interests.
- 2.20 To ensure findings are shared with appropriate Directors, Governors and Staff and to review and monitor Governance and Management's response to findings;
- 2.21 To prepare an annual report for submission to the Board on the work of the Committee including an opinion on the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements, internal controls and risk management systems;
- 2.22 To review any relevant ESFA or National Audit Office reports;
- 2.23 To review as appropriate any financial benchmarking reports or returns;

- 2.24 To consider any matters that may cause reputational risk to the trust;
- 2.25 To review the Committee's Terms of Reference on an annual basis and propose any changes to the Board.
- 2.26 Oversee any whistleblowing complaints and ensure appropriate action is taken

3. Standards and Pupil Experience Committee

The role of the Standards and Pupil Experience committee is to ensure the highest educational standards for all pupils through quality teaching and excellent provision so that all pupils have an opportunity to fulfil their potential and engage positively with school life. It is also to ensure that the education and formation delivered is wholly in keeping with that required in a Catholic school under the oversight of the diocesan bishop.

Membership:

The committee shall be comprised of:-

- 2 or more directors, (2 to be quorate)
- Up to 2 co-opted members with appropriate professional skills

Meetings may require the attendance of the CEO, head teachers, and other staff as required

- 3.1 Ensure the highest standards of Catholic education for all pupils in the Trust;
- 3.2 Ensure that the formation offered in a Catholic Trust meets the needs of pupils and staff;
- 3.3 Promote all aspects of the Catholic life of the trust and its academies, sharing the fruits with the parishes of the trust area;
- 3.4 Ensure that the curriculum on offer in any of the academies meets the needs of the pupils, widens their experiences and creates a love of learning preparing them to be citizens of the world ready to use their talents in the support of others;
- 3.5 Ensure that each pupil has the opportunity to make progress through high quality teaching;
- 3.6 Review annually the school improvement policy;
- 3.7 Receives termly data on the outcomes for all pupils in each academy
- 3.8 Identifies appropriate rapid intervention where a school is at risk of serious underperformance;
- 3.9 Maximises the engagement with national initiatives where it is in the interests of the trust;
- 3.10 Annually provide the Trust board with an analysis of the outcomes of each academy in national tests, celebrating achievement and developing with the academy council plans to support areas of need;
- 3.11 Ensure advice and support for the teaching of a Catholic curriculum including RE;
- 3.12 Ensure the teaching of RSE is in line with the requirements of the Church and that parents are consulted and fully informed of the programmes used by academies;
- 3.13 Ensure academies are prepared for Canonical inspection;

- 3.14 Monitor and where necessary intervene on attendance
- 3.15 Monitor and where required act on exclusions;
- 3.16 Set the uniform policy for the trust's academies;
- 3.17 Monitor the number of pupils on roll, admissions and the related procedures to ensure that all statutory guidelines are adhered to correctly;

4. Academy Council

- 4.1 The Trust Board will establish an Academy Council for each school or across a number of schools where appropriate. Each Academy Council will nominate a Chair for approval by the MAT Board.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the Academy Council to:
 - 4.2.1 Set the school's vision and strategy, to achieve key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) established by the trust board against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured;
 - 4.2.2 Support development and ongoing review and update of the Academy Self-Evaluation and Academy Improvement Plan;
 - 4.2.3 Uphold the Catholic ethos of the Academy and Trust;
 - 4.2.4 Ensure high outcomes for pupils and young people raising any concerns with the trust board;
 - 4.2.5 Identify and deal with areas of underperformance, including the implementation of the Academy Improvement Plan;
 - 4.2.6 Use the resources available to the Academy to raise standards and provide evidence of the success of the strategies adopted;
 - 4.2.7 Raise staff performance through robust performance management and recruitment in conjunction with the trust board;
 - 4.2.8 Ensure that the curriculum is in line with the strategic aims and values of the Trust;
 - 4.2.9 Liaise with and receive reports from the SGtGCAT as appropriate, and to make recommendations about the matters being considered by the Board that impact on the individual school;
 - 4.2.10 Seek to understand how the Academy is led and managed. The Academy Headteacher will report termly on how the Academy is fulfilling the trust's ethos, vision and strategy.
 - 4.2.11 Review and monitor the Academy agreed budget plan and staffing structure to support delivery of Academy key priorities.
 - 4.2.12 Agree the arrangements for self-evaluation and monitoring of the Academy Council's performance;
 - 4.2.13 Act as the panel when reviewing the Academy Headteacher's decisions on exclusions, and parental complaints;

- 4.2.14 Be the consulting body for Academy stakeholders;
 - 4.2.15 Represent the Academy stakeholders;
 - 4.2.16 Forge links with the parish and community;
 - 4.2.17 Act as an ambassador for the Academy
- 4.3 In order to decide how resources will be deployed to achieve this, the Academy Council shall
- 4.3.1 Implement and monitor all Trust wide policies;
 - 4.3.2 Contribute to the formulation of the Academy Improvement Plan, through the consideration of financial priorities and proposals, in consultation with the Headteacher, with the stated and agreed aims and objectives of the Academy;
 - 4.3.3 Contribute to the formulation of the Academy budget and assess its implications for the Academy in consultation with the Headteacher, in advance of the financial year involved, drawing any matters of significance or concern to the attention of the trust accountant and Finance and Resources Committee;
 - 4.3.4 Monitor and review expenditure and ensure compliance with the overall financial plan for the Academy;
 - 4.3.5 Agree an annual plan for the expenditure of Pupil and Sports Premium and to monitor both actual spending and impact on student progress;
 - 4.3.6 Appoint all staff except the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Head of RE and other staff identified in the Scheme of Delegation;
 - 4.3.7 Support the Headteacher in recruitment and selection;
 - 4.3.8 Monitor the effectiveness of performance management in relation to improved outcomes;
 - 4.3.9 Govern admissions and appoint a panel to apply admissions criteria in accordance with SGtGCAT policy and delegation, Diocesan Guidance, the Admissions Code and with due regard to any locally agreed fair access protocols;
 - 4.3.10 Establish exclusion appeal panels in accordance with appropriate DfE regulations;
 - 4.3.11 Set Academy policy and procedures (as determined to be Academy policies by the Board) and ensure that the Academy adheres to Trust-wide policies and procedures;
 - 4.3.12 Develop and implement appropriate risk management strategies and maintain a risk register that is subject to review at each meeting;
 - 4.3.13 Monitor and be accountable for standards, and as such prepare an annual report for submission to the Board (or more frequently, if requested) on the work of the Academy Council including an opinion on the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements, internal controls and risk management systems;
 - 4.3.14 Review any relevant ESFA or other key reports;
 - 4.3.15 Review as appropriate any financial benchmarking reports or returns;

4.3.16 In exercising its responsibilities, the Academy Council will have as a core principle the provision of the best possible, Catholic education for all pupils or students in the Academy.

October 2023