

Whitecotes Primary Academy – Local Governing Body

Autumn Term 2018

Cavendish Learning Trust

Whitecotes Academy is part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) called the Cavendish Learning Trust (CLT). CLT was established in September 2016 with the following schools – Netherthorpe Secondary Academy, and, Barrowhill, Poolsbrook and Whitecotes Primary Academies. Dunston Primary School & Gilbert Heathcote Infant School also joined the Trust in 2018. MATs normally operate in accordance with The Department for Education (DfE) guidance by having a Board of Trustees for the Trust as a whole and then Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) which have responsibilities for individual Academies or groups of Academies within the Trust. The DfE requires that the Board of Trustees has three core functions:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Role of Local Governors

The CLT has developed a Governance Structure and delegated some responsibilities to LGBs which are listed below. Generally, the LGB takes a strategic role in leading the school and, the Headteacher and staff have the operational responsibility for running the school on a day to day basis. It is important to maintain this distinction but to provide both support and challenge to the Headteacher to enable her to deliver the agreed strategic priorities.

Core responsibilities of each LGB

Working within the framework established by the Board of Trustees the key responsibilities of each Local Governing Body in respect of its Academy are as follows:

Strategic direction

- Help the Board shape the vision, values, priorities and objectives for the Trust, these being backed by targets and key performance indicators. Then support the Headteacher to apply these throughout the Academy.
- Ensure the Academy has an effective Improvement/Development plan for Board approval.
- Support the Headteacher in the implementation of Trust-wide policies.
- Ensure the work of the Academy complies with all statutory duties.

Accountability

- Make recommendations regarding the appointment and performance management of the Headteacher within the framework established by the Board.
- Monitor, review and challenge the Academy's progress against the established plans, priorities, targets and key performance indicators.
- Contribute to Board reviews of the quality of teaching and effectiveness of the curriculum on offer.
- Ensure the arrangements for exclusions and other pupil-related matters are effective and with Governor participation on panels as is appropriate.
- Engage with the community and other stakeholders on behalf of the Trust and the Academy.

Financial and contractual probity and regularity

- Ensure the Academy works within the budget and funding model set by the Trust.
- Monitor, review and challenge spending in order to ensure there are no unplanned overspends.
- Ensure the Academy works within the Trust's disciplines for proper financial and contractual systems and controls, this will include value for money, risk management and procurement.
- Ensure the Academy gives accurate and timely support to the boards processes for preparing and approving annual accounts.

Staffing

- Ensure the effective delivery of Trust-wide conditions of employment and adherence to its HR policies, including pay and reward.
- Ensure Governors are available to sit in on relevant panels to support the HT in areas such as recruitment, discipline, capability, grievance and appeals.
- Oversee appointments and dismissals, other than the minority which are dealt with at Trust level.

Infrastructure

- Monitor and challenge the effective use of space, equipment and other assets.
- Contribute to Board led reviews of the longevity of major assets including ICT systems thus ensuring appropriate and affordable plans are developed for timely and cost effective replacement.

- Ensure that Academy land and other capital assets are being used in compliance with those legal requirements which relate to them.
- Ensure that within the Academy, appropriate arrangements are in place for meeting its environmental obligations.

Governance

- Ensure the Local Governing Bodies members are operating to the highest standards required in public life and that they contribute to Board reviews of Local Governing Body and Board effectiveness.
- Establish effective supporting committee as required e.g. pay matters, disciplinary and appeals.
- Maintain an up to date register of business interests, within the Trust framework.
- Deal in a timely and effective way with actual and potential conflicts of interest, alerting the CEO and Board Chair as appropriate.
- Oversee the election of staff and parent governors.

How Whitecotes Governors are organised

We operate as a team, using the skills and experience of each governor to best effect and ensure that responsibilities are shared to ensure governors remain engaged and committed.

The **Local Governing Body** meets at least eight times a year to cover the high level strategic issues. Business includes items such as - consulting on the Values and Vision for the school, agreeing priorities and the School Improvement Plan, challenging the Senior Leadership Team to deliver against targets, monitoring school activities and data, and, gathering evidence that shows the school is having a positive impact.

Outline agendas for future meetings of the Committees are agreed in advance to enable governors to be satisfied that the all business is being covered at the appropriate time and, they are fulfilling their responsibilities.

A **Strategic Group** meeting is held between the Chair, Vice Chair and Headteacher at least 2 weeks before each meeting of governors to determine agendas. Other Strategy Meetings are set up as needed to deal with on-going key issues.

Other committees such as the Pay Committee, Headteacher Performance Management Committee and any Disciplinary Committees etc are set up during the year as required.

Each Governor has a responsibility to gather evidence for a particular area of the school's work such as Data on Achievement & Progress; Teaching and Learning; Safeguarding;

Behaviour; Parents and Pupils, and, Finance. The governor makes visits to the school to gather evidence and then reports back their findings to the Full Governing Body.

Governors are expected to join in discussions at LGB meetings, to play their part in supporting the school to improve and to undertake any training or development which might be needed to help them better serve the interests of the school. A key role is to ask challenging questions of school leaders and to be prepared to make difficult decisions.