

## Chair Role Description

### Chair of Directors

The Chair of Directors of the Board is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the Board and has a vital role in setting the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance. It is the Chair's role to give the Board clear leadership and direction, keeping it focused on its core functions. The Chair should encourage the Trust Board to work together as an effective team, building its skills, knowledge and experience.

The Chair needs to ensure that everyone is actively contributing relevant skills and experience, participating constructively in meetings, and actively involved in the work of any committees. It is the Chair's role to make sure everyone understands what is expected of them and receives appropriate induction, training and development. It is for the Chair to have honest conversations, as necessary, if anyone appears not to be committed or is ineffective in their role.

The Chair must not exercise as an individual any of the functions of the Trust Board except where this has been sanctioned by the Trust Board or is explicitly covered by the Scheme of Delegation.

### Core Responsibilities

To ensure effective and efficient conduct of the Trustees' business by:

- Working with the CEO and Clerk to the Trust Board the agenda for all of the Board's meetings;
- Inviting members of staff and professional advisors to Board meetings to comment and advise on Trust Board business as appropriate;
- Guiding each meeting through the items on the agenda (unless modified with agreement of the Trust Board);
- Giving immediate rulings on complaints and queries relating to the procedure and conduct of the meeting (the Chair's decision being final);
- Ensuring that all Trustees are given the opportunity to express their views before any decisions are taken and to ensure that only those who are entitled to speak (eg those without a conflict of interest) are invited to do so;
- Determining at Trust Board meetings whether any late items will be accepted onto the agenda.

- establishing a constructive relationship between the Trust Board, its committees, the CEO and in particular by:
  - Liaising with the CEO to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate;
  - Attending meetings with the CEO on a sufficiently regular basis;
  - Playing a role as member of the Committee;
  - Review the performance of the CEO and dealing
  - with disciplinary and any other personal matters concerning the CEO;
  - Ensuring when a vacancy arises that the CEO is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion.
- representing the Trust at public occasions and making comments on behalf of the Trust to the press and other media as appropriate.
- approving transactions reserved for the Chair of the Trust Board in the Scheme of Delegation.
- ensuring that the Vice-Chair of the Trust is sufficiently engaged in the functions undertaken by the Chair of the Trust to enable the Vice-Chair to discharge the duties of the Chair if the Chair is absent or unavailable for a period of time

### **Chair of a Committee of the Trust Board**

Each committee will elect a new chair at the start of a new academic year. The chair of a committee will ensure the effective and efficient conduct of the committee's business, and in particular:

- agree with the appropriate employee, the agenda for all of the committee's meetings;
- invite members of staff and professional advisors to committee meetings to comment and advise on committee business as appropriate;
- guide each meeting through the items on the agenda (unless modified with agreement of the committee);
- give definitive rulings on complaints and queries relating to the procedure and conduct of the meeting (the committee Chair's decision being final in the event of a split vote);
- to ensure that all members of the committee are given the opportunity to express their views before decisions are taken and to ensure that only those who are entitled to speak (eg those without a conflict of interest) are invited to do so;
- to determine at Committee meetings whether any late items will be accepted on to the agenda.

The chair of the committee will also:

- establish a constructive relationship with the Vice-Chair and other members of the committee, Directors, CEO and the appropriate employees
- liaise with the CEO and the appropriate employees to keep an overview of the affairs related to the terms of reference of the committee as appropriate; ensure

the minutes of the meeting accurately represent the business, any issues arising or decisions required; ensure the minutes are available to the Board of Directors.

### **Skills and Attributes for being a Chair**

A Chair should be able to demonstrate a good selection of the skills/attributes set out below:

- Commitment to the school
- Good understanding of the environment in which the school is operating and wider education policy
- Personal integrity
- Negotiation and diplomacy skills
- Good understanding of the legal responsibilities of the board as both individuals and a corporate entity
- Strong communication skills
- Good organisational skills
- Ability to think strategically
- Ability to prioritise
- Ability to chair meetings well
- Ability to have courageous conversations and make courageous decisions
- Ability to build and get the best out of a team
- Capacity to process information quickly and understand relevant data
- Ability to delegate

### **Vice Chair**

A vice-chair will be elected annually, at the start of each academic year for the Board and each committee.

### **Core Responsibilities**

The responsibilities are:

- To support the Chair in delivering their responsibilities.
- To deliver on specific tasks as delegated by the Trust Board from time to time.
- To act as Chair and to subsume the responsibilities of the Chair if the Chair is absent or unavailable for a period of time up to either the return of the Chair or the election of a new Chair by the Board.

### **Further information on the role of Local Governors**

More information can be found in:

- The Governance Handbook at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook)

- Soke Education Trust Scheme of Delegation
- Soke Education Trust Articles of Association