



STEP Academy Trust Scheme of Delegation

Key points and Summary

This document outlines:

The requirements of the Articles of Association regarding delegation

The principles of decision making within STEP Academy Trust

The scheme of delegation within STEP Academy Trust

The respective roles of Members, Trustees, Executive Team, Academy Committees and Academy Leadership Teams

The meetings of the Academy Committees

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Approved: Summer 2019

Review: Summer 2020

Responsibility for review: Board of Trustees

1. Introduction and Statement of Intent

As a charity and company limited by guarantee, STEP Academy Trust (“the Trust”) is governed by a Board of Trustees (the “Trustee” or “Trustees”) who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Trust and the academies run by the Trust. This Scheme of Delegation will apply to all academies for which the Trust is responsible (the “Academies”). Any reference to “the Academies” in this Scheme of Delegation refers to all Academies within the Trust.

The Trustees are accountable to external government agencies including the Charity Commission, Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Education (including any successor bodies) for the quality of the education they provide and they are required to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of quality, safety and good practice.

In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Trustees appoint people to serve on a board (the “Academy Committee” or “AC”) which has been established to support the good governance of the Academies.

This Scheme of Delegation explains the ways in which the Trustees fulfil their responsibilities for the leadership and management of the Academies, the respective roles and responsibilities of the Trustees and the members of the Academy Committees and the commitments to each other to ensure the success of STEP Academy Trust.

This Scheme of Delegation has been put in place by the Trustees from the Effective Date in accordance with the provisions of the Trust’s Articles of Association (“the Articles”)

2. Ethos and Mission Statement

2.1 STEP Academy Trust’s mission is as follows:

At STEP Academy Trust we are committed to improving the life chances of all children. Where we have the capacity to make a difference, we are morally bound to do so. Members of the Trust strive together for excellence in partnership, so that our children, staff and Academy communities benefit from excellent teaching, learning and leadership.

The Trustees and Academy Committees recognise their responsibility towards the common good, not just of the Academies for whom the Trust is responsible, but of all of the families and communities in the areas served by the Academies.

2.2 STEP Academy Trust is governed by:

- Members – guardians of STEP Academy Trust, their role is similar to that of shareholders of a limited company
- Trustees – appointed by Trustees to oversee the business of STEP, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance
- Executive Team – manage the day to day business of the Trust in line with policies approved by Trustees

- Academy Committee – provide support to Academy Leadership Teams as the Academy implements policies and improvement plan priorities
- Academy Leadership Team – manage the day to day business of an individual academy under the oversight of the Executive Team with challenge and support from the Academy Committee

3. Scope and Applicability

This Scheme of Delegation outlines the framework for decision making within STEP Academy Trust. It applies to all Members, Trustees, Governors serving on the ACs and staff.

To aid decision making, a “Decision Matrix” is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Articles of Association

The following are the relevant clauses from the Articles of Association that outline what can, and cannot, be delegated.

4.1 Subject to provisions of the Companies Act 2006, the Articles and to any directions given by special resolution, the business of the Trust shall be managed by the Trustees, who may exercise all the powers of the Trust.

4.2 Subject to the Articles, Trustees:

- will appoint separate committees to be known as Academy Committees to govern one or more Academies; and
- will establish other committees to ensure quality assurance and to enable the Trust to focus on strategic development.

4.3 Subject to the Articles, the constitution, membership and proceedings of any committee shall be determined by the Trustees. The establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the Trustees shall be reviewed at least once in every twelve months.

4.4 The membership of any committee of the Trustees may include persons who are not Trustees, provided that (with the exception of the Academy Committees) a majority of members of any such committee shall be Trustees. Except in the case of an Academy Committee, (AC), no vote on any matter shall be taken at a meeting of a committee of the Trustees unless the majority of members of the committee present are Trustees.

4.5 Trustees may delegate to any Trustee, committee (including any AC), the CEO or any other holder of an executive office, such of their powers or functions as they consider desirable to be exercised by them. Any such delegation shall be made subject to any conditions the Trustees may impose, and may be revoked or altered.

4.6 The implementation and impact of functions delegated to the ACs will be quality assured by the STEP Education Committee and the STEP Finance and Operations Committee.

4.7 Trustees shall appoint the Executive Team of the Trust and may delegate such powers and functions as they consider are required by the Executive Team for the internal organisation, management and control of the Trust and Academies (including the implementation of all policies approved by the Trustees and for the direction of the teaching and curriculum at the Academies).

4.8 The Board of Trustees cannot delegate any functions relating to the:

- constitution of the Trust;
- appointment or removal of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Trustees;
- suspension or removal of Trustees;
- delegation of functions, i.e. the adoption or revision of this Scheme of Delegation;
- establishment of committees;
- dissolution of committees.

5. **Members**

5.1 The Trust will have:

- 4 external Members (i.e. not Trustees)
- 1 internal Members (Chair of Trustees)

5.2 Members are the guardians of the Trust's constitution, determining the governance structure of the Trust and providing oversight and challenge of the Trustees to ensure the charitable object of the Trust is being fulfilled.

5.3 Members may agree to appoint/remove additional Members. The CEO is not required to be a Member as employees of the Trust cannot be Members. Members can appoint and remove any Trustee subject to the provisions outlined in the Articles of Association. Trustee appointments will be ratified by Members. Any removal by the Board of a Trustee appointed by the Members shall only be undertaken with the consent of the Members.

5.4 Members will be able to sign off the Annual Report and Accounts, however this will be delegated to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

6. **Board of Trustees**

6.1 The Board of Trustees (or Trust Board) is able to exercise all of the powers of STEP Academy Trust. It is responsible for the performance of the Trust.

6.2 The Board will offer support, constructive advice, a sounding board for ideas, a second opinion on proposals and help where needed, but will also challenge, ask questions, seek information, improve proposals and so seek to arrive at the best outcome for the Trust.

6.3 As trustees of a charity (the Trust), Trustees have a fiduciary duty to act in good faith in the best interests of the Trust. This duty includes a responsibility to do the following:

- ensure compliance with any legal obligations;

- report on the Trust’s activities (the Trust must prepare accounts in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities, the so called “Charity SORP” and any reporting requirements of the Education & Skills Funding Agency);
- fulfil the charitable object of the Trust as set out in its constitution (i.e. the Articles of Association) and to act in a way which is compliant with the rules of the Trust contained in the Articles;
- act with integrity and to avoid any personal conflicts of interest and not to misuse any charity funds or assets;
- act prudently in the financial management of the Trust, avoiding putting any assets, funds or reputation of the Trust at undue risk;
- exercise reasonable care and skill, using personal knowledge and experience to ensure the Trust is well run and efficient; and
- act responsibly, getting advice from others, including professional advisors, where appropriate.

6.4 Subject to any change in policy from time to time or where circumstances merit a different approach, the Trust Board will be constituted as follows:

- Non-Executive Trustees;
- 1 Executive Trustee (usually the CEO)
- Associate Trustees (i.e. advisers to the Board).

6.5 The Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Trustees is set out in Appendix 2. Specific skills may be needed if a Trustee is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area, or to undertake the role of the Chair of the Trust. A regular skills audit will be undertaken and Trustees should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Trust and the Academies.

Detailed terms of reference for the Trust Board are attached as Appendix 3.

7. Committees

7.1 The Trust Board will establish a structure of committees as appropriate. These committees will act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Trustees except where powers have been specifically delegated to them by the Trust Board.

7.2 The Trust Board will establish the following committees:

- Finance and Operations Committee;
- Education Committee;
- Academy Committees.

7.3 Academy Committees

7.3.1 Academy Committees are assigned to support a specified academy or group of academies as directed by the Trust Board.

7.3.2 When the Trust Board deems that there are sufficient Governors in place to ensure the committees are effective, there will be Lead Governors in each of the following areas:

- Safeguarding (including Looked After Children (LAC) and SEND);
- Additional areas as applicable.

Role Descriptions for Lead Governors are outlined in the Lead Governor Booklet at Appendix 8.

7.3.3 In order to be functional, the composition of any AC responsible for two academies within STEP Academy Trust must meet the following minimum criteria:

- 1 Academy Leader Governor, ex-officio (the leader of the Academy);
- 1 Staff Governor (from the Academy, elected by members of staff);
- 2 Parent Governors (1 from each Academy, elected by parents/carers or appointed by the AC where no-one has stood for election);
- 2 Co-opted Governors (i.e. appointed by the AC).

7.3.4 The maximum membership of the AC will be:

- 2 Academy Leaders Governors, ex-officio (each representing different Academies);
- 2 Staff Governors (each representing different Academies);
- 2 Parent Governors (1 from each Academy, elected by parents/carers or appointed by the AC where no-one has stood for election);
- 4 Co-opted Governors.

7.3.5 Where an Academy has a leadership model in excess of one leader per academy, for example two part-time Headteachers or an Executive Headteacher and Head of School, both members of staff will be members of the AC. However, they will only have a single vote. Where a disagreement occurs between the Headteacher and Executive Headteacher, the senior leader will have the deciding vote.

7.3.6 Any AC may appoint Associate Governors, subject to the approval of the Trustees. Associate Governors will have no voting rights and their term of office will be limited to one year. The purpose of the role will be to provide short-term support in areas where the AC identifies a need for development.

7.3.7 The Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Governors is set out in Appendix 5. Specific skills may be needed if an individual is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area, or to undertake the role of the Chair of the Academy Committee (additional role responsibilities are set out in the appended Job Description). A regular skills audit will be undertaken and Governors should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Trust and the Academies for which they are responsible.

Detailed terms of reference for the Academy Committee are attached as Appendix 6.

8. Academy Leadership Team

8.1 The Academy Leader is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of their Academy, for advising on and implementing the Trust's strategic framework, for the implementation of all policies approved by the Trustees for the direction of the teaching and the curriculum at the Academy.

8.2 In line with models provided, the Academy Leader will contextualise aims, objectives and policies for the Board to consider, and will report to the AC on progress at each meeting in accordance with a schedule drawn up annually with the Chair of the AC. The Academy Leader will work closely with the senior management team to this end.

8.3 The Academy Leader and staff are accountable to the STEP Trust Board and to the AC for the Academy's performance. The Executive Team and the Trustees will be prepared to explain its decisions and actions to anyone who has a legitimate interest. This may include staff, pupils and parents as well as the Secretary of State, Education and Skills Funding Agency ("ESFA") and Local Authority.

8.4 The Academy Leader will comply with any reasonable direction by the Trust Board or Executive Team when acting on the Trust's behalf.

8.5 The Academy Leader will agree and monitor appropriate delegations of authority with other staff.

9. Term of Office

The term of office for any person serving on the Academy Committee shall be 4 years, save that this time limit shall not apply to the CEO, Executive Headteacher (or any Academy Leader serving in an ex officio capacity), who will serve for as long as he or she remains in office and persons who are Associate Governors who shall serve for 1 year - subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Governor, any person may be re-appointed to re-elected (including being "Co-opted" again) to the Academy Committee.

10. Resignation and Removal

10.1 A person serving on the Academy Committee shall cease to hold office if he or she resigns his or her office by notice to the Academy Committee (but only if at least three persons will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect).

10.2 A person serving on the Academy Committee shall cease to hold office if he is removed by the person or persons who appointed him. Whilst at the same time as acknowledging that no reasons need to be given for the removal of a person who serves on the Academy Committee by a person or persons who appointed him, any failure to uphold the values of the Trust and/or the Academies or to act in a way which is appropriate in light of this Scheme of Delegation or to comply with the role responsibilities set out in the "Job Description and Person Specification" will be taken into account. A person may also be removed by the Trustees but only after the Trustees have given due regard to any representations by the Academy Committee. The removal of a Parent Governor will be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances.

10.3 If any person who serves on the Academy Committee in his or her capacity as an employee at

any of the Academies ceases to work at the Academy, then he or she shall be deemed to have resigned and shall cease to serve on the Academy Committee automatically on termination of his or her work at the Academy.

10.4 Where a person who serves on the Academy Committee resigns his or her office or is removed from office, that person or, where he or she is removed from office, those removing him or her, shall give written notice thereof to the Clerk to the Academy Committee who shall inform the Chair of the Academy Committee, the Chair of Trustees and the Executive Secretary.

11. Disqualification of members of the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee

11.1 No person shall be qualified to serve on the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee unless he or she is aged 18 or over at the date of his or her election or appointment. No current pupil of the Academy shall be entitled to serve on the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee.

11.2 A person serving on the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee shall cease to hold office if:

- he or she becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing or administering his or her own affairs;
- he or she is absent without the permission of the Chair of the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee from all the meetings of the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee held within a period of six months and the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee resolves that his or her office be vacated.

11.3 A person shall be disqualified from serving on the Board of Trustees/ Academy Committee if:

- his or her estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- he or she is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order;
- at any time when he or she is subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Trustees Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order);
- he or she would cease to be a trustee/governor by virtue of any provision in the Companies Act 2006 or is disqualified from acting as a trustee/governor by virtue of section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
- he or she has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which he or she was responsible or to which he or she was privy, or which he or she by his or her conduct contributed to or facilitated;
- at any time when he or she is:
 - included in the list kept by the Secretary of State under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999; or
 - disqualified from working with children in accordance with Section 35 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000; or
 - barred from regulated activity relating to children (within the meaning of section 3(2) of

the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).

- he or she is a person in respect of whom a direction has been made under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or is subject to any prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
- where he or she 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 178 of the Charities Act 2011.

11.4 After the Academy has opened, a person shall be disqualified from serving on the Academy Committee if he or she has not provided to the Chair of the Academy Committee a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1977. In the event that the certificate discloses any information which would in the opinion of either the Chair of the Academy Committee or the Academy Leader confirm their unsuitability to work with children that person shall be disqualified. If a dispute arises as to whether a person shall be disqualified, a referral shall be made to the Chair of Trustees to determine the matter. The determination of the Chair of Trustees shall be final.

11.5 Where, by virtue of this Scheme of Delegation, a person becomes disqualified from serving on the Strategic Academy Committee and he or she was, or was proposed, to so serve, he or she shall upon becoming so disqualified give written notice of that fact to the Academy Committee.

This clause shall also apply to any member of any committee of the Academy Committee who is not a member of the Academy Committee.

12. Annual Review

12.1 This Scheme of Delegation shall operate from the Effective Date. The Trustees will have the absolute discretion to review this Scheme of Delegation at least on an annual basis and to alter any provisions of it.

12.2 In considering any material changes to this Scheme of Delegation or any framework on which it is based, the Trustees will have regard to and give due consideration of any views of the Academy Committee.

13. Meetings of the Academy Committee

13.1 Subject to this Scheme of Delegation, the Academy Committee may regulate its proceedings as the Executive Team deem suitable.

13.2 The Academy Committee shall meet at least three times in every academic year. Meetings of the Academy Committee shall be convened by the Clerk to the Academy Committee. In exercising his or her functions under this Scheme of Delegation the Clerk shall comply with any direction:

- given by the Trustees or the Academy Committee; or

- given by the Chair of the Academy Committee or, in his or her absence or where there is a vacancy in the office of the Chair, the Vice-Chair of the Academy Committee, so far as such direction is not inconsistent with any direction given as mentioned above.

13.3 Any three members of the Academy Committee may, by notice in writing given to the Clerk, requisition a meeting of the Academy Committee; and it shall be the duty of the Clerk to convene such a meeting as soon as is reasonably practicable. As this circumstance would be exceptional, the reasons for the Extra-Ordinary Meeting will be included in the opening remarks of the Chair at the meeting. If more than one Extra-Ordinary Meeting was requested in an academic year, the Governors requiring the second meeting would first discuss the matter with the Executive Team, who in turn would inform Trustees.

13.4 Each member of the Academy Committee shall be given at least seven clear days before the date of a meeting:

- notice in writing thereof, signed by the Clerk, and sent to each member of the Academy Committee at the address provided by each member from time to time; and
- a copy of the agenda for the meeting;

provided that where the Chair or, in his absence or where there is a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice-Chair, so determines on the ground that there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice of a meeting, and the copy of the agenda thereof are given within such shorter period as he directs.

13.5 The convening of a meeting and the proceedings conducted thereat shall not be invalidated by reason of any individual not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda thereof.

13.6 A resolution to rescind or vary a resolution carried at a previous meeting of the Academy Committee shall not be proposed at a meeting of the Academy Committee unless the consideration of the rescission or variation of the previous resolution is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.

13.7 A meeting of the Academy Committee shall be terminated forthwith if:

- the members of the Academy Committee so resolve; or
- the number of members present ceases to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Academy Committee.

13.8 Where a meeting is not held or is terminated before all the matters specified as items of business on the agenda for the meeting have been disposed of, a further meeting shall be convened by the Clerk as soon as is reasonably practicable, and where possible within seven days of the date on which the meeting was originally to be held or was so terminated.

13.9 Where the Academy Committee resolves to adjourn a meeting before all the items of business on the agenda have been disposed of, the Academy Committee shall before doing so determine the time and date at which a further meeting is to be held for the purposes of completing the consideration of those items, and they shall direct the Clerk to convene a meeting accordingly.

13.10 The quorum for a meeting of the Academy Committee, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be three Governors.

13.11 The Academy Committee may act regardless of any vacancies on its board, but, if the numbers of persons serving is less than the number fixed as the quorum, the continuing persons may act only for the purpose of filling vacancies.

13.12 The quorum for the purposes of:

- any vote on the removal of a person in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation;
- any vote on the removal of the Chair of the Academy Committee;
 - shall be any two-thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time persons entitled to vote on those respective matters and the CEO.

13.13 Subject to this Scheme of Delegation, every matter to be decided at a meeting of the Academy Committee shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the persons present and entitled to vote on the question. Every member of the Academy Committee shall have one vote.

13.14 Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to any other vote he may have. The Chair will clearly state their reasons for the casting vote.

13.15 The proceedings of the Academy Committee shall not be invalidated by:

- any vacancy on the AC; or
- any defect in the election, appointment or nomination of any person serving on the AC.

13.16 A resolution in writing, signed by all the persons entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the Academy Committee, shall be valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Academy Committee duly convened and held. Such a resolution may consist of several documents in the same form, each signed by one or more of the members of the Academy Committee and may include an electronic communication by or on behalf of the Academy Committee indicating his or her agreement to the form of resolution providing that the member has previously notified the Academy Committee in writing of the email address or addresses which the member will use.

13.17 The Academy Committee shall ensure that a copy of:

- the agenda for every meeting of the Academy Committee;
- the draft minutes of every such meeting, if they have been approved by the person acting as 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 at each Academy to persons wishing to inspect them.

13.18 There may be excluded from any item required to be made available, any material relating to:

- a named teacher or other person employed, or proposed to be employed, at the Academy;
- a named pupil at, or candidate for admission to, the Academy; and
- any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Academy Committee, Executive Team or Trustees are satisfied should remain confidential.

13.19 Any member of the Academy Committee shall be able to participate in meetings of the Academy Committee by telephone or video conference provided that:

- he or she has given notice of his or her intention to do so detailing the telephone number on which he or she can be reached and/or appropriate details of the video conference suite from which he or she shall be taking part at the time of the meeting at least 48 hours before the meeting; and
- the Academy Committee has access to the appropriate equipment, and
- if after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

14. Notices

14.1 Any notice to be given to or by any person pursuant to this Scheme of Delegation (other than a notice calling a meeting of the Academy Committee) shall be in writing or shall be given using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified for that purpose to the person giving the notice. In this Scheme of Delegation, "Address" in relation to electronic communications, refers to the STEP Trust individual email addresses provided to each Governor, Trustee or employees.

14.2 A notice may be given by the Academy Committee to its members either personally or by sending it by post in a prepaid envelope addressed to the member at his registered address or by leaving it at that address or by giving it using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified to the Academy Committee by the member. A member whose registered address is not within the United Kingdom and who gives to the Academy Committee an address within the United Kingdom at which notices may be given to him or her, or an address to which notices may be sent using electronic communications, shall be entitled to have notices given to him or her at that address, but otherwise no such member shall be entitled to receive any notice from the Academy Committee.

14.3 A member of the Academy Committee present, either in person or by proxy, at any meeting of the Academy Committee shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and, where necessary, of the purposes for which it was called.

14.4 Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Proof that a notice contained in an electronic communication was sent in accordance with guidance issued by the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. A notice shall be deemed to be given at the expiration of 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted or, in the case of a notice contained in an electronic communication, at the expiration of 48 hours after the time it was sent.

15. Indemnity

Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 every member of the Academy Committee or other officer or auditor of the Company acting in relation to the Academy shall be indemnified out of the assets of the Company against any liability incurred by him or her in that capacity in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in favour or in which he or she is acquitted or in connection with any application in which relief is granted to him or her by the court from liability for negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust in relation to the affairs of the Company.

16. Appendices

Appendix 1: Decision Matrix and Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Job Description and Role Responsibilities of a Trustee

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees

Appendix 4: Job Description and Role Responsibilities of a Governor

Appendix 5: Terms of Reference for the Academy Committees

Appendix 6: Committee Terms of Reference - STEP Finance and Operations Committee

Appendix 7: Committee Terms of Reference – STEP Education Committee

Appendix 8: Lead Governor Booklet

APPENDIX 1 DECISION MAKING MATRIX

STEP Trustees comprise the full Trust Board and any Trustee Committees that the Board establishes. The powers delegated to Committees are outlined in the Committees Terms of Reference. Where decisions and powers are delegated to Trustee Committees, they are reviewed and ratified by the full Board.

Strategy X = Recommend ✓ = Approve	Academy Leadership	Academy Committee	Executive Leadership	STEP Trustees	STEP Members
Appointing and removing Members					✓
Appointing Trustees			X	✓	
Removing Members and Trustees					✓
Deciding the committee structure for the Board				✓	
Appointing and removing the Clerk to the Board				✓	
Appointing and removing Co-opted Trustees				✓	
Appointing and removing Co-opted Governors (within usual function of the AC)		X		✓	
Appointing and removing Co-opted Governors (where identified issues within AC)			X	✓	
Electing Chairs of ACs		X		✓	
Removing Chairs of ACs			X	✓	
Appointing and removing the Clerk to the AC			X	✓	
Agreeing Terms of Reference for all committees and reviewing annually				✓	
Planning the schedule of work for the Board			X	✓	
Providing a model schedule of work for ACs			X	✓	
Contextualising the schedule of work for each AC	X		✓		
Quality assuring the schedule of work for ACs				✓	
Setting the values, vision and strategic aims for the Trust			X	✓	
Contextualising the vision for each academy	X		✓		
Establishing the Scheme of Financial delegation			X	✓	
Developing a format for each Academy's development and assessment documents (e.g. AIP, SEF)			✓		
Creating the AIP and SEF for each Academy	X		✓		
Reviewing and challenging the Headteacher's feedback to AC, with reference to the AIP and other documents relevant to the specific areas of focus for the AC (safeguarding, standards and stakeholders engagement).		✓			

Strategy X = Recommend ✓ = Approve	Academy Leadership	Academy Committee	Executive Leadership	STEP Trustees	STEP Members
Setting the Academy day			✓		
Setting the Academy year			X	✓	
Strategic Leadership and External Partnerships					
Be responsible for the long term strategy of the Trust and each Academy, ensuring the Trust's strategic plan is robust, accountable and promotes outstanding teaching and learning			X	✓	
Promote collaboration within the Trust and externally and identify and support the development of strategic partnerships that support the vision of the Trust			X	✓	
Consider strategic threats and opportunities in relation to the Academies, assessing the impact on premises, curriculum, resources and admissions. No expansion or contraction of any Academy will be permitted without the Board's consent	X		✓		
Consider strategic threats and opportunities in relation to the Academies, assessing the progress and improvement in relation to safeguarding, stakeholder engagement and standards.		X	✓		
Provide a perspective on the wider education community and the challenges facing state funded schools	X		✓		
Intervene in the management of an Academy where necessary			X	✓	
Assist with the creation of a public face and external identity for the Academies within the Trust, facilitating discussions with those who might be considered	X		✓		
Assist with the promotion of a public face and external identity of Academies within the Trust		X	✓		
Approve the Admission Policy for the Academies			X	✓	
Support the implementation of the Admission Policy within the Academies, including acting as the initial decider for any exclusions by the Headteachers	X	✓			
Be made aware of all complaints coming in across the Trust and support Headteachers where deemed appropriate		X	✓	✓	
Academy improvement					
Assist the Academies' leadership teams in the development of the curriculum which meets the Academy's specific needs and has regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any nationally recognised curriculum priorities and initiatives • The obligation to provide religious education, sex education and physical education • Special educational needs • National testing and attainment targets and • Any teaching objectives and priorities adopted by the Trust Board for all Academies 		X	✓		

Strategy ✗ = Recommend ✓ = Approve	Academy Leadership	Academy Committee	Executive Leadership	STEP Trustees	STEP Members
Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the AIP for each Academy and the extent to which it meets the needs of all stakeholders		✗	✓		
Monitoring and evaluating the Trust Improvement plans and ensuring that the plans and objectives meet national, regulatory and stakeholder needs			✗	✓	
Quality assuring the AIP for each Academy			✓		
Validating or challenging grades in the SEF/STEP Standard Evaluation			✗	✓	
Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning			✗	✓	
Monitoring and evaluating value for money at the academy			✗	✓	
Monitoring and evaluating behaviour, safety, welfare and engagement with stakeholders			✗	✓	
Identifying patterns and trends to bring to the attention of the Board			✗	✓	
Pupils, parents and community					
To determine who will be offered a place in accordance with the Admission Policy		✓	✗		
To ensure that the AC and Academy complies with all regulations re the publishing of information			✓		
To ensure that all stakeholders have a voice in decisions that impact on them		✗		✓	
Be responsible for all consultations and engagement with the community		✗		✓	
Financial management					
Approving financial procedures in accordance with legal and DfE requirements and best practice			✗	✓	
Ensuring that the financial procedures are implemented effectively			✗	✓	
Maintaining accurate, reconciled and up to date records to provide financial and statistical information	✗		✓		
Establishing and maintaining asset registers in accordance with financial procedures	✗		✓		
Ensuring that any disposal of assets complies with the financial procedures and is reported			✗	✓	
Maintaining a register or pecuniary and business interests of governors and staff			✗	✓	
Establishing and maintaining procedures for effective audit in accordance with legal and DfE requirements			✗	✓	
Receiving reports from audit inspections and the resulting Action Plan			✗	✓	
Ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements in accordance with the financial procedures			✗	✓	
To approve the first formal budget plan each financial year in accordance with DfE timeframes			✗	✓	
Review reports from internal audit			✗	✓	
Ensure delivery of agreed actions from internal audit reports	✗		✓		

Strategy ✗ = Recommend ✓ = Approve	Academy Leadership	Academy Committee	Executive Leadership	STEP Trustees	STEP Members
Produce Monthly Budget and Key Performance Indicator Report	✗		✓		
Monitor Monthly Budget and Key Performance Indicator Report			✗	✓	
Ensure alignment between Academy Improvement Plan and Annual Budget	✗		✓		
Risk Management					
Ensure appropriate risk management policies are in place			✗	✓	
Review risk register for the academy	✗		✓		
Review the risk register for the Trust			✗	✓	
To monitor, review, and amend as necessary, the Trust's actual financial performance throughout the year and at year end			✗	✓	
Ensuring that all transfers between budget headings (virements) comply with the financial procedures	✗		✓		
Establish procedures for staff, Trustees and Governors to claim expenses			✗	✓	
Establishing Trust policies			✗	✓	
Ensuring that any writing off of debts complies with the financial procedures			✗	✓	
Ensuring that all procurement processes and resulting contracts and agreements conform with the financial procedures			✗	✓	
Complying with VAT and CIT regulations			✗	✓	
Premises & Estates					
To establish and implement a Buildings Maintenance Strategy			✗	✓	
Where appropriate raise funds, approving of grant applications put forward by the CEO and or the Academy Committees	✗		✓		
To ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation			✗	✓	
Staffing					
Recruiting & Appointing Headteachers			✗	✓	
Recommending the staffing structure for each Academy	✗		✓		
Approving the overall staffing structure for each Academy			✗	✓	
Develop and adopt a set of HR policies and contracts to be used by all Academies ensuring consistency and having regard to all legal responsibilities and the equality duty, consulting as necessary			✗	✓	

Strategy X = Recommend ✓ = Approve	Academy Leadership	Academy Committee	Executive Leadership	STEP Board	STEP Members
Develop and implement termly Key Performance Indicators to assess the quality and success of teaching and learning at all stages of education			X	✓	
Approve Key Performance Indicators to assess the quality and success of teaching and learning at all stages of education			X	✓	
Monitor the standards of teaching and learning in each of the Academies, ensuring that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained			X	✓	
Formulate, implement and keep under review a policy for disciplinary and grievance procedures			X	✓	
Facilitate discussion with staff representative bodies, including the Unions at both Trust Board level and within the Academy			X	✓	
Appraisal of Executive Team (excluding CEO)				✓	
Appraisal of central STEP Team for Operations and Financial				✓	
Appraisal of Headteachers including recommendations re pay			✓		
Reviewing recommendations re teachers' and support staff salaries in each Academy	X		✓		
Suspend or dismiss Headteachers			X	✓	
Suspend or dismiss teachers and support staff	X		✓		
Approve any additional payments to staff (e.g. redundancy)					
Identifying statutory policies for use across the Trust			X	✓	
Ensuring that all statutory policies and documents are in place in each Academy	X		✓		
Monitoring the implementation and evaluating the impact of all statutory policies.			X	✓	

Appendix 2

Job Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Trustees



STEP Academy Trust

Job title:	Trustee
Location:	Trust Board meetings to be held in a STEP Academy or Central London Location. Site visits to local STEP Academies as necessary Site visit to STEP Academy Trust registered office as necessary
Hours:	Up to six Trust Board meetings a year Remote involvement via email/telephone Regular review of reports and documentation
Salary range:	Voluntary
Term of office:	Four years

Job purpose: The Trustees oversee the management and administration of the Trust and the Academies run by the Trust.

Elected members of political parties are not eligible to become STEP Trustees, due to potential conflicts of interest

Job Description

Governance

The corporate management and trustee responsibility for the Trust is vested in the Trustees, who will also be the company Trustees registered with Companies House. The Trustees are personally responsible for the actions of the Trust and the Academies and are accountable to the Members of the Trust, the Secretary of State for Education and the wider community for the quality of the education received by all pupils of the Academies and the expenditure of public money.

The Trustees are required as trustees and pursuant to the Funding Agreements to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of the quality, safety and good practice of the affairs of the Trust.

Specific responsibilities of the Trust Board and the Trustees

The role of the Trust Board and the Trustees collectively is to:

- determine the strategic vision and overarching strategic plan of the Trust;
- provide strategic leadership and governance;
- develop effective links within the Academy's community, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academies meet their responsibilities to the community and serve the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils;
- provide challenge and support to senior leaders including the CEO;
- develop and decide strategic and statutory policies;
- facilitate collaboration between the Academies to actively seek opportunities for the Academies to work together either with the aim of improving economic efficiencies within the Trust or identifying and implementing best practice across all Academies;
- encourage and oversee shared services and resources;
- oversee the implementation of Academy action plans focusing on Academy improvement;
- set and monitor performance benchmarks;
- determine curriculum priorities;
- set the overall Trust budget and approve of Academy budgets;
- monitor expenditure in accordance with appropriate authorisations;
- develop and implement a risk management strategy;
- ensure the Trust and the Academies comply with their legal obligations;
- determine the Trust's reserves/contingency policy;
- ensure appropriate insurance or risk cover is put in place;
- undertake recruitment and performance management of Executive Team;
- ensure staff training programmes and opportunities for professional development;
- support the development and building of leadership and governance capacity at Academy level;
- approve of site and asset management strategies;
- oversee any significant capital expenditure and building projects;
- approve of all funding applications;
- act as decision maker for all appeals.

Core Competencies

The following core competencies and skills expected of the Trustees are that they will:

- work as a team;
- attend meetings and be prepared to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;
- be respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;
- treat all confidential information confidentially;
- act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy;
- develop a deep understanding of the vision and ethos of the Trust and its Academies and the roles played by all individuals in fulfilment of the Trust's mission;
- understand the policies and procedures of the Trust and how these flow down to the Academies;
- support the Trust in public and act as an ambassador of the Trust and the Academies;
- commit to training and skills development;
- be ready to ask questions;
- be focused on problem solving and be ready to learn from past experiences;
- adhere to the Nolan Principles in their conduct;
- Evidence the values of STEP Academy Trust in communications and actions

Person Specification

Personal qualities and values – to have:

- the desire to create positive change for young people;
- commitment to the aims and objectives of STEP Academy Trust;
- willingness to devote time and effort;
- ability to work effectively as a team while contributing an independent perspective;
- ability to build productive and supportive professional relationships;
- commitment to the Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice;
- commitment to Safeguarding young people.

Education and training – to have:

- A record of continuous professional development;
- Education to higher level in professional area of expertise.

Experience of:

- Driving positive change;
- Leadership and management;
- Senior level Professional experience in relevant sector.

Knowledge

- understand and accept legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship;
- understand of the use of attainment and other data to assess the progress, strengths and weaknesses of an educational environment;
- understand of financial and workforce data.

Skills:

- An ability to think creatively and strategically ;
- Good, independent judgement;
- An ability to use financial and workforce data to inform decision-making.

Legal Requirements:

Individuals who are not able to make the following declarations may not serve as a Trustee:

- I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee;
- I have not been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (or any such conviction is legally regarded as “spent”);
- I have not been involved in tax fraud or other fraudulent behaviour including misrepresentation and/or identity theft;
- I have not used a tax avoidance scheme featuring charitable reliefs or using a charity to facilitate the avoidance;
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt;
- I have not made compositions or arrangements with my creditors from which I have not been discharged;
- I have not been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity;
- I have not been disqualified from serving as a company Trustee;
- I am not included in the list kept by the Secretary of State for Education under s1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (or equivalent) or have ever been disqualified from working with children or serving on a governing body of a school.

I am able to provide a valid Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which does not disclose any reason why I should be unsuitable for working with children.

Appendix 3

Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees



STEP Academy Trust

STEP ACADEMY TRUST (“the Trust”)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TRUST BOARD (“the Trust Board”)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 2019

PURPOSE

The Trustees of the Trust have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of Academies, but have delegated the specified responsibilities to Academy Committees, who will support the work of the Trust and promote the success of the Academies. The day to day management and responsibility for the running of the Academies has been delegated to the CEO (also a Trustee), who will be supported by both a central management team (where appropriate) and leadership teams in each of the Academies, including the Headteachers appointed in respect of the Academies. The role and responsibilities of the Trustees and those serving on an Academy Committee are set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

The Trustees fulfil their responsibilities through strategic planning and by the setting of policy and standards as well as taking responsibility for the oversight and management of risk. The Trustees have the power to direct change where required. The Trustees must act independently and in the best interest of the Trust even if those interests conflict with those of the body or organisation that might have appointed or nominated such persons to serve on the Trust Board. The Trustees are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and to the communities that they serve. The Trustees, whilst in certain circumstances possibly also sitting on an Academy Committee, are responsible for all the Academies run by the Trust and are expected to use their skills and experience in undertaking a role on the Trust Board.

MEMBERSHIP

The composition and powers of the Trust Board are (subject to charity and company law) determined by the Articles of Association and in any conflict between these Terms of Reference and the Articles, the Articles shall prevail. Board members must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the ethos and values of the Trust and a commitment to fulfilling the Trust’s mission and objectives for the Academy, drawing on specialist skills where required.

The number of Trustees shall be not less than three but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall not be subject to any maximum.

QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Trustees, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be any three Trustees, or where greater, any one third (rounded down to a whole number) of the total number

of Trustees holding office at the date of the meeting, who are in each case present at the meeting and entitled to vote on the matters to be resolved.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Trustees are specified within the Decision Matrix in Appendix 1 of the STEP Scheme of Delegation.

REVIEW

In accordance with best practice, the Trust Board will carry out a regular review of the skills and experience available on the Trust Board and will seek to develop additional capacity and skills where required. Except in relation to posts held in an ex officio capacity and otherwise only in exceptional circumstances, Trustees will not seek reappointment beyond the usual 3 terms of office, a standard term of office being 4 years.

THE GENERAL EQUALITY DUTY

The Trust must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Protected characteristics

- Age (not pupils);
- Disability;
- Ethnicity and race;
- Gender;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Religion and Belief;
- Sexual identity and orientation.

Appendix 4

Role Description and Person Specification incorporating a Code of Conduct and Role Responsibilities for Governors (including specific responsibilities of the Chair)



STEP Academy Trust

Job title:	STEP Governor serving on an Academy Committees
Location:	Academy Committee meetings to be held at the relevant Academies Site visits to local STEP Academies as necessary
Hours:	Minimum of three Academy Committee meetings a year Remote involvement via email/telephone Regular review of reports and documentation
Salary range:	Voluntary
Term of office:	Four years

Job purpose: The Academy Committee for an Academy or Academies plays an active part in supporting the leadership of the Academy, and holding oversight of the Academies.

Appointments to the Academy Committee will be made by the Academy Committee itself, subject to any ratification by the Trustees of STEP Academy Trust. Recommendations to appoint may be put forward by either the Head Teachers or by the Trustees. Elected members of political parties are not eligible to become STEP governors, due to potential conflicts of interest.

Job Description

Governance Support and Local Accountability

The role of those serving on an Academy Committee is an important one, ensuring there is local responsibility for the performance of the Trust and the Academies and that the Academies serve their communities. Those serving on an Academy Committee are accountable to the Trust Board and must ensure that at all times they act in good faith and in the best interests of the Academies and the Trust, exercising reasonable care and skill having particular regard to personal knowledge and experience.

Specific responsibilities of STEP Governors

The specific tasks and responsibilities of STEP Governors are as follows, to:

- ensure implementation of the strategic vision of the Trust and the Academies in particular;
- support the Trust Board in developing and maintaining effective links within the Academies' communities, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academies meet their responsibilities to the community and serves the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils;
- support and challenge the Academy's senior leadership team in regard to;
- review delegated local Academy policies;
- provide advice and feedback to the Trustees as sought;
- ensure the implementation of any Academy plan;
- undertake all and any appropriate community consultation;
- provide a point of contact for parents, carers and other members of the local community;
- maintain effective links with the local community.

Core Competencies

The following core competencies and skills expected of Governors are to:

- work as a team;
- attend meetings and be prepared to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;
- be respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;
- treat all confidential information confidentially;
- act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy
- develop a deep understanding of the vision and ethos of the Trust and its Academies and the roles played by all individuals in fulfilment of the Trust's mission;
- understand the policies and procedures of the Trust and how these flow down to the Academies;
- support the Trust in public and act as an ambassador of the Trust and the Academies;

- commit to training and skills development
- be focused on problem solving and be ready to learn from past experiences;
- act in accordance with any authority delegated to him or her, including complying with any regulation or requirement of those from whom delegated authority is received;
- adhere to the Nolan Principles in their conduct;
- Evidence the values of STEP Academy Trust in communications and actions

Person Specification

To be same as Trustee, except education to higher level (not relevant), and strategic and creativity skills

Legal Requirements:

Individuals who are not able to make the following declarations may not serve on the Academy Committee:

- I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee
- I have not been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (or any such conviction is legally regarded as “spent”)
- I have not been involved in tax fraud or other fraudulent behaviour including misrepresentation and/or identity theft
- I have not used a tax avoidance scheme featuring charitable reliefs or using a charity to facilitate the avoidance
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt
- I have not made compositions or arrangements with my creditors from which I have not been discharged
- I have not been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity
- I have not been disqualified from serving as a company Trustee
- I am not included in the list kept by the Secretary of State for Education under s1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (or equivalent) or have ever been disqualified from working with children or serving on a governing body of a school
- I am able to provide a valid Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which does not disclose any reason why I should be unsuitable for working with children

Additional Responsibilities of the Chair

The role of the Chair of the Academy Committee is an important one, demanding yet worthwhile. The Chair is elected by the Governors annually but because of the vital link and the importance of maintaining a strong and effective relationship between the Academy Committee and the Trust Board, the appointment following election is subject to the approval of the CEO, on behalf of the Trust Board. The Chair must be approachable, readily accessible and ready to take issues and ideas raised by Governors seriously.

The Chair's specific duties are to:

- provide a clear lead and direction for the Governors, understanding the aims of the Academies, the roles played by all those involved and the vision of the Trust in relation to its Academies;
- build an effective team, attracting Governors with necessary skills and experience promoting equality and diversity;
- work closely with the Leadership Team to ensure there is appropriate challenge and encouragement whilst respecting the professional expertise and knowledge of the academy's leaders, and the personal accountability of the individuals within the leadership team;
- ensure that Academy improvement is the focus of all policy and strategy for the Academies, reminding Governors of this as often as necessary;
- hold Governors to account, ensuring the business of the Academy Committee is conducted efficiently and effectively, chairing meetings ensuring all members have the opportunity to contribute and are listened to with clear decisions being made when necessary.

Appendix 5

Terms of Reference for the Academy Committee



STEP Academy Trust

STEP ACADEMY TRUST (“the Trust”)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ACADEMY COMMITTEE (“the Academy Committee”)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 2019

PURPOSE

Each Academy is accountable to and must serve its community. All children deserve and should expect to receive a high standard of education. Whilst the Trustees of the Trust have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, and the standards achieved by the pupils and students of the Academies, an Academy Committee has been set up to ensure the vision of the Trust is fulfilled. The Academy Committee is focused on the day to day life of the Academies for which it has responsibility and is there to ensure the staff working in the Academies are supported and challenged, when necessary, and the needs of the pupils and students are met with a particular focus on the context of each academy.

MEETINGS

The Academy Committee shall meet at least once a term.

QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Academy Committee is any three of the members of the Academy Committee, or, where greater, any one third (rounded down to a whole number) of the total number of persons holding office on the Academy Committee at the date of the meeting. The quorum for the purposes of: appointing a parent member; any vote on the removal of a person in accordance with this Scheme of Delegation; any vote on the removal of the chairman of the Academy Committee; shall be any two-thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time persons entitled to vote on those respective matters.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Governors are specified within the Decision Matrix in Appendix 1 of the STEP Scheme of Delegation.

MEMBERSHIP

The role of those serving on the Academy Committee is an important one, fulfilling the Trust’s mission and providing feedback to the Trustees of the Trust. Those serving on the Academy Committee must act independently and in the best interest of the Academies and the Trust, whilst recognising that the Academy is part of a family of schools run by the Trust each with collective responsibility. They will act as ambassadors of the Academies and the Trust and must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the ethos and values of the

Trust and a commitment to fulfilling the Trust's mission and objectives for the Academies, using their skills and experience and drawing on specialist skills where required.

Specific skills may be needed if a member of the Academy Committee is to take responsibility for and lead on a specific area as part of a working party or when invited to serve on any of the Trust's committees looking at stakeholder engagement and continuous school improvement across the Trust. A regular skills audit will be undertaken and those serving on the Academy Committee should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Academies.

The Academy Committee will comply with any guidance issued from time to time by the Trust Board as to the composition of the Academy Committee, the carrying out elections and any other matter affecting the functioning of the Academy Committee, including the holding of meetings and the removal of Governors. Minutes of all meetings will be sent to the CEO.

The responsibilities of the Academy Committee are specified in the Decision Matrix within the Scheme of Delegation.

REVIEW

In accordance with best practice, the Academy Committee will carry out a regular review of the skills and experience available on the board and will seek to develop additional capacity and skills where required. The Trust Board will review these Terms of Reference on a regular basis and will support the work of the Academy Committee.

THE GENERAL EQUALITY DUTY

The Academies must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Protected characteristics

- Age (not pupils)
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual identity and orientation



STEP Academy Trust

STEP Finance and Operations Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Membership

3 members comprising of:

- 3 non-executive members of STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees.

It is preferable that the Chair of the Committee has Financial and/or Audit and Governance experience.

The Chair will be appointed by the STEP Board of Trustees.

In addition, a Clerk will be appointed to assist with the administration of the Committee. The CEO, and members of the Executive Management Team will be required to attend via invitation, along with other staff as the need arises. Executive Trustees are invited to attend on an information only basis and do not participate in discussion or decision making.

2. Period of Office

The members of the Committee shall serve for a period of two years, and are eligible for re-election.

Membership shall cease by:

- mutual agreement
- resignation as either a Trust Trustee or Trust Employee

3. Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year, usually at least two weeks prior to the STEP Trustees' Board meeting.

4. Quorum

At least one member and the Chair.

5. Authority

The Finance and Operations Committee is a Committee of the 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.

The Finance and Operations Committee is authorised to obtain outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary, normally in consultation with the Accounting Officer and Chair of the Board of Trustees. However, the Finance and Operations Committee may not incur expenditure in excess of £10,000 in any single financial year without the prior approval of the Board of Trustees.

6. Purpose

With regard to the Trust, the Finance and Operations Committee is to maintain oversight of:

- Governance and internal control (incl. internal audit)
- Risk management
- Financial management and value for money
- External audit
- Financial statements and annual reports.

In addition, the Committee will operate a Pay Review function to receive, review and make decisions on the remuneration of staff working across the STEP Trust, with the exception of the CEO. The remuneration of the CEO will be considered by the Committee, with a recommendation as appropriate made to the Board of Trustees.

7. Duties

The duties of the Finance & Operations Committee are to:

- 7.1 Advise the Board of Trustees and the Accounting Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the areas highlighted within section 6. This advice will take the form of a verbal report accompanied by minutes to the Board of Trustees, as well as a written report to be received at the autumn term Board meeting.
- 7.2 Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees with regard to the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remuneration of the external auditor.
- 7.3 Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees with regard to the need for, and when appropriate, the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and remunerations of an internal auditor and/or other assurance provider to enable the Board to sign the corporate governance statement in the annual accounts.
- 7.4 Advise the Board of Trustees on an appropriate programme of work to be delivered by independent assurance provider (ie Internal Audit). The programme of work will be derived from the Finance and Operations Committee's review of the key risks facing the Trust, the assurance framework and its duty to report to the Board.

- 7.5 Review the external auditor's annual planning document and approve the planned audit approach.
- 7.6 Receive reports from external auditor and other bodies, for example the Education and Skills Funding Agency, and consider any issues raised, the associated management response and action plans. Where appropriate, reports should be referred to the Board for action.
- 7.7 Regular monitoring of outstanding actions raising from independent assurance providers, ensuring any delays in implementing recommendations are reasonable
- 7.8 Review the STEP Fraud Policy and ensure that all allegations of fraud or irregularity are investigated appropriately.
- 7.9 Consider any additional services delivered by the external auditor or other assurance provider and ensure appropriate independence is maintained.
- 7.10 Ensure appropriate cooperation and coordination of the work of external auditors and the Internal Auditor.
- 7.11 Consider the need to meet with the external auditors, without management present, at least annually.
- 7.12 Review the high level processes and procedures in place to manage the financial management within each Academy.
- 7.13 Oversee the development of STEP specific Financial Procedures manual, in line with Academies Handbook and other ESFA guidance.

8. Administration

The Finance and Operations Committee will meet at least once per term, usually at least two weeks in advance of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the following requirements will be met:

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, the Chair of the Board of Trustees cannot be a member of the Finance and Operations Committee. Where the Chair of the Board is a member of the Finance and Operations Committee, the exceptional circumstances must be clearly stated and approved at the start of each meeting.
- The Chair of the Finance and Operations Committee will be a Trustee of the Trust.
- The Accounting Officer, Chief Finance and Operations Officer and any other paid staff will have no voting rights and cannot Chair the Committee.
- Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of Finance and Operations Committee, with all required papers and reports circulated at least five working days in advance of the meeting.

Appendix 7

Terms of Reference for STEP Education Committee



STEP Academy Trust

STEP Education Committee

Terms of Reference

Membership

3 members comprising of:

3 members of STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees. The Chair will be appointed by the STEP Board of Trustees.

In addition, a Clerk will be appointed to assist with the administration of the Committee. The CEO, and members of the Executive Team will be required to attend via invitation, along with other staff as the need arises.

Period of Office

The members of the Committee shall serve for a period of two years, and are eligible for re-election.

Membership shall cease by:

- mutual agreement
- resignation as either a Trust Trustee or Trust Employee

Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year, usually at least two weeks prior to the STEP Trustees' Board meeting.

Quorum

At least one member and the Chair.

Authority

The Education Committee is a Committee of the Board and is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board.

Purpose

With regard to the Trust, the Education Committee is to maintain oversight of:
Monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and attainment and the quality of teaching, ensuring the Trust provides a consistently high quality learning experience and delivers a broad and balanced curriculum in keeping with the Trust's aims and vision, all pupil needs and legal requirements.

Duties

The duties of the Education Committee are to:

- i. Advise the Board of Trustees, holding ACs to account on the adequacy and effectiveness of the areas highlighted within the Purpose;
- ii. take appropriate action on any relevant matter referred by the AC.
- iii. Report or make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the Trust wide Academy Improvement Plan.

Administration

The Education Committee will meet at least once per term, in advance of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the following requirements will be met:

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, the Chair of the Board of Trustees cannot be a member of the Education Committee. Where the Chair of the Board is a member of the Education Committee, the exceptional circumstances must be clearly stated and approved at the start of each meeting.
- The Chair of the Education Committee will be a Trustee of the Trust
- Any paid staff will have no voting rights and cannot Chair the Committee
- Agendas will be agreed in advance by the Chair of Education Committee, with all required papers and reports circulated at least five working days in advance of the meeting.



STEP LEAD GOVERNORS

A RESOURCE FOR GOVERNORS

September 2019

All Academy Committees must have a Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors. In addition, Academy Committees may appoint individual governors to have oversight of a specific area of responsibility.

This booklet contains some “role descriptions” for governors taking on such a responsibility. Please note that the roles and key tasks are not exhaustive – there may be other roles that governors take on which are particularly relevant to each Academy.

Academy Committees should consider the responsibilities and remit of the Academy Committee (safeguarding, stakeholder engagement and standards) within the connect of each of its allocated academies, and determine the appropriate lead roles it considers necessary to be appointed in order to ensure the Academy Committee can properly monitor and assist with ensuring the progress and attainment of these academies. Further guidance and recommended roles may be obtained from the Trust as requested.

CONTENTS

Safeguarding Governor (Including Attendance, CLA, SEND)
Chair of Governors
Vice-Chair of Governors

SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR (INCLUDING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN)

Role Description

The “Keeping Children Safe in Education” Statutory Guidance for Academies and Colleges produced by the Department for Education defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Providing for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a statutory requirement for all schools. Provision for SMSC should link closely to each Academy’s ethos and values, and the broad and balanced curriculum that it aims to provide.

Part of the role of the Safeguarding Governor will be to challenge and ensure that each Academy provides a safe, supportive environment for all pupils, and that it enables them to participate in school life, and to develop the skills and attitudes that will prepare them for life in a diverse society. They should also ensure all staff are able to work in a safe and vigilant school environment.

Another part of the role is to be a champion for Children Looked After (CLA) in each Academy on behalf of your Academy Committee, to be familiar with STEP’s policy for Looked After Children and to help ensure that they remain high of your Academy Committee agenda.

Your role is to act as a critical friend to your Academy(ies) to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda. All statutory governance responsibilities and that the safeguarding agenda is embedded within the ethos of our Trust, to promote a strong culture of safeguarding.

Key Tasks

- Be familiar with current legislation on child protection and safer recruitment, STEP's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and be aware of changes to the regulations.
- Liaise regularly with the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding (often the Headteacher), about general child protection and broader safeguarding issues in each Academy (including **Children Looked After (CLA)** and pupils with **Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities – SEND**), record keeping systems and report back to your Academy Committee on a regular basis.
- Have oversight of the Single Central Record (SCR) and HR files and ensure it is up to date and maintained in line with current guidance.
- Undertake appropriate training on child protection/safeguarding and encourage other governors to attend.
- Monitor training and development undertaken by governors to ensure at least one governor on any recruitment and selection panel for staff has successfully completed accredited Safer Recruitment training.
- Monitor progress against any outstanding actions from your Academy Committee's annual Safeguarding Audit and any other reviews/inspections.
- Ensure all are aware of how to maintain a highly vigilant culture of safeguarding in each Academy where the safeguarding of all pupils is paramount.
- Ability to articulate how governors and staff within the Academy, at all levels, have worked to create a strong, positive culture of safeguarding.
- To ensure safeguarding procedures are in place and all responsibilities are exercised to keep pupils whose **attendance** is below National Average (96%) and those who are **Persistently Absent (PA)** safe. Academy leaders, including governors must ensure these pupils attend well and make progress. This includes the **attendance of CLA, CP, SEND** and any other **vulnerable** families or individuals.
- Ensure there are regular questions are asked, **safeguarding scenarios** shared and safeguarding updates given, along with visual information displayed around each Academy. **Safeguarding information** must be shared with parents/ carers to support the high expectations of safeguarding across each Academy.
- To ensure that your Academy Committee discusses the attainment of **the attainment of CLA, CP and SEN/D** on a regular/annual basis.
- To ensure that each Academy has effective procedures for communicating with carers of CLA and parents/carers of pupils with SEN/D.
- To ensure that if your Academies do not currently have any SEN/D or Children Looked After on roll, they are well prepared to meet their needs should the position change.
- To be familiar with the STEP Safeguarding Proforma below:

AC Termly Safeguarding visits

Name of Governor:

Date:

Responsibility: Safeguarding

Academy:

Focus area of this visits:

The focus should be agreed with Academy Leaders prior to any visits and in line with guidance given. It may be necessary to sharpen the visit focus according to Academy priorities, for example reducing Persistent Absence (PA).

Key questions to seek answers to: (questions below are examples only)

- How have leaders shaped their **curriculum** to ensure pupils learn about local, national and online risks?
- How do leaders seek to understand if pupils know how to **keep themselves safe** and seek help if they feel unsafe?
- **What does Pupil Voice say about Safeguarding?** (*What % of children feel safe or know how to keep themselves safe?*)
- What are leaders doing on a regular basis to help staff understand how to identify and deal with a range of potential safeguarding concerns?
- **What does Parent Voice say about Safeguarding?** (*% of parents think their children are safe at Academy? Has this increased or decreased from last year?*)
- What difference has recent **training and updates** made to safeguarding practices and culture within the school?
- What have leaders put in place to **protect pupils against** bullying, racist abuse, harassment or discrimination, radicalisation and extremism and promote good behaviour?
- What **systems of reporting** are leaders making use of across the school? How do they assure themselves that it is effective?
- Which **external agencies** are leaders working with to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?
- How have leaders worked to ensure Children Looked After (CLA) and those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEN/D) have **individual needs identified and met**? How well are they learning and making progress?
- How does the Academy ensure adults working with children are appropriately **recruited and vetted**, receive appropriate training, guidance, support and supervision to undertake effective safeguarding of pupils?
- How effective are **health and safety** policies and procedures, including conducting necessary risk assessments as well as regular checks on equipment and premises?

Governor observations and comments

Safeguarding Curriculum SCR and Staff files

CLA Progress and Attainment SEN/D Progress and Attainment

Conversations with staff and pupils

Key issues arising for the Academy Committee:

-
-

Positive practice to share and celebrate:

Date report shared with the Head Teacher:

Date shared with committee/AC:

Action agreed (record any action agreed by the AC/HT/SLT, etc):

- ★
- ★
- ★

Next Visit:

Safeguarding Audit – Annual

This could form the basis of the main AC Safeguarding Lead visit or visits that all AC members conduct.

SAFEGUARDING

Audit: Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment, Child Protection, Policies and Procedures, Site Safety

Academy:

Safeguarding Audit: Pupil Voice

(interview children from Year 1 – Year 6 over the year: Year R in the spring/summer term)

What helps you to feel safe in the Academy?

*

Are there any places around the Academy where pupils/you might not feel safe? Where? Why?

*

Can you explain the difference between someone being unkind and being bullied? (Determine if the children understand what bullying is, ie: more than once)

*

What would you do if you see someone bullied at your Academy or someone tells you they are being bullied? G

*

What are the different ways that you have learnt to keep yourself safe online?

*

Who would you talk to if you had any concerns whilst at school? What would you want them to do? (to check that children feel they are able to talk to a member of staff if they have any concerns)

*

Safeguarding Audit: Staff Voice

(talk to different staff each time, for example caretaker, cleaners, cooks, teaching staff, office staff)

What actions are taken to ensure any staff recruited is suitable and safe to work in this school?

How are you helped to know what risks you may face and how to keep safe?

How have all staff been supported to keep up to date with Safeguarding duties, procedures and practices?

What difference has your annual Safeguarding training had on the way you work and protect children?

When should you report Safeguarding concerns directly to the Police?

How is the curriculum used to help pupils know what risks they face and learn how to keep themselves safe?

In your opinion, what is a strong and vigilant safeguarding culture?

If you had potential safeguarding concerns about the Headteacher or any other senior leader, who can you talk to?

What else would you like the AC to do to help promote and maintain a strong safeguarding culture?

Who else across the Trust helps to check and develop a strong and vigilant culture of safeguarding? How?

Safer Recruitment and the Single Central Record (SCR)

Questions for Office staff/SBM and/or Senior Leader/HT

What is the purpose of the SCR?

How often does a member of the Senior Leadership Team check that records are accurate

and the agreed Safer Recruitment procedures are in place and followed?	
What is your definition of Safeguarding? <i>(See Keeping Children Safe in Education document).</i>	
When completing safer recruitment procedures, what usually holds up the process? Are there any outstanding references or DBS? What are the timelines in place to ensure they are concluded swiftly?	
<u>Policies and Procedures</u> Who are your Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Leads/Officers – Can I see their DSL Certificates please. Who has Safer Recruitment Training? Please show me their certificates	Whose DSL Certificates seen? Whose Safer Recruitment Certificates seen? What is missing? When will you follow this up?
When was the last whole staff Safeguarding training? Did it include updates related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREVENT • Radicalisation • Extremism • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) • Peer on Peer Abuse • Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) • Children Missing I Education (CME)? 	Date: What was missing from the training/update and why? When will this be updated for staff?
Have all your staff read the key document <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i>? <i>(All staff should be aware of this doc good practice for all staff to sign to say have read)</i>	When was this document given to staff? How do leaders know it has been read? Was there a quiz? Ask to see examples of the quiz
How can you be sure that all staff know the safeguarding procedures? How do you know?	
What is in place to ensure everyone knows who to contact/how to act in event of a disclosure? <i>(ie: there should be a poster displayed/ accessible in the foyer/staff room with photos of DSLs).</i>	
How do you ensure that colleagues are kept up-to-date with safeguarding and related aspects?	
Child Protection Questions for Inclusion Lead/SENDCo	
How effective is your Academy in identifying any pupils who may be at risk? <i>(Staff communication, procedures, flow chart of 'what to do', files from previous Academy, if in any doubt, call MASH).</i>	
How many children are on the CP register? <i>(ask to see a CP plan)</i>	
Have there been any safeguarding incidents or allegations since your last Ofsted inspection? <i>(How many?)</i>	
In the last 12 months, how many referrals to MASH/Early Help/Chanel Panel/Police have resulted due to CP concerns? <i>(ask for a brief of steps taken and how monitored)</i>	
In the last 12 months, how many referrals to MASH/Early Help/Chanel Panel/Police have resulted due to concerns around Radicalisation and Extremism?	

