



Local Governing Bodies: Constitution and Terms of Reference

The Athelstan Trust

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1. Introduction

The Athelstan Trust is a family of caring, collaborative, and excellent schools. Rooted in local communities, we create opportunity for all, nurture talent, and inspire ambition. Through inclusive and transformative education, we enable every student and colleague to thrive and reach their full potential.

These terms of reference have been made by the Trustees of The Athelstan Trust (**Academy Trust**). The document is part of the suite of documents that set out the governance framework for the Athelstan Trust. It should be read in conjunction with our:

- Articles of Association
- Scheme of Governance
- Scheme of Delegation
- LGB Agenda Planner

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Local Governing Body (LGB), as a committee of the Trust Board, is to provide local assurance on the quality of experience within the school.

This is achieved through effective strategic leadership, informed support and challenge, strong engagement with the school community, and effective reporting to the Trust Board.

3. Scope

For the purposes of governance, *quality of experience* includes the lived experience of pupils, staff, and families, including:

- The quality of education and curriculum delivery
- Inclusion, SEND provision, Pupil Premium and equality of opportunity
- Safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, and wellbeing
- School culture, values, and relationships
- Engagement with parents, carers, and the local community

LGBs do not manage these areas but **seek assurance that they are effective, inclusive, and aligned with Trust expectations.**

LGBs fulfil their role by:

- **Supporting and challenging school leaders**
 - Holding leaders to account for the quality of experience and outcomes
 - Asking informed, constructive questions
 - Providing insight without directing operational activity
- **Providing local insight and assurance**
 - Gaining first-hand understanding through visits, meetings, monitoring and engagement
 - Identifying strengths, risks, and emerging issues
 - Providing timely, accurate feedback to the Trust Board
- **Championing Trust values and strategic alignment**
 - Promoting the Trust's vision, ethos, and priorities

- Supporting consistency of approach while recognising local context
- Ensuring policies and practice reflect Trust expectations
- **Engaging with the school community**
 - Facilitating positive relationships with parents, carers, and stakeholders
 - Ensuring local voices and perspectives are understood and reflected
 - Supporting the school's role within its community

To maintain clarity and effectiveness, LGBs do **not**:

- Manage the school on a day-to-day basis
- Become involved in individual operational decisions
- Act as an alternative leadership or executive body
- Override Trust-wide strategy, policies, or decisions
- Have detailed involvement in centralised functions including finance, HR and estates except to the extent that these are significantly affecting the pupil experience.

Operational responsibility rests with school leaders and the Trust executive.

How the LGB Works:

- Operates within the **Scheme of Delegation**
- Acts collectively, not as individual governors
- Works in partnership with school leaders and the Trust
- Maintains confidentiality, professionalism, and integrity at all times
- Acts as a **critical friend**, balancing support with robust challenge

Our Scheme of Delegation sets out the responsibilities for specific tasks, and this is supported by the LGB Agenda Planner.

4. Communication with the Trust Board

The relationship between the Trust Board and the LGB is based on two-way engagement. LGBs to provide essential visibility to Trustees.

LGB Reporting

LGBs provide local insight and assurance, and it is essential that helpful evidence accrued is shared with the Trust Board. There are two elements to this reporting:

1. LGB headlines – each LGB will share 3-4 headlines from each LGB meeting. These should be sent to the Trust Governance Professional within 1 week of the meeting taking place and will be shared with Trustees at the next Trustee Board meeting.
2. Risk Escalation – LGBs are responsible for reviewing the school risk register. Where appropriate, the risks should be reported to the Governance Professional for escalation to the Trust Board via the Audit and Risk Committee. These could be actual

or potential risks to the delivery by the school of a high quality, inclusive education, or operational matters which might need more co-ordination between the school academy and Trust.

Board engagement with LGBs

The Trust Board shall support the work of the LGB by:

- setting a clear strategic vision to allow the LGB to set and achieve its own vision and strategy
- ensuring that systems are put in place to allow the Governors to be presented with timely and accurate data to allow them to analyse school performance, and thereby to support and challenge the Headteacher and the senior leadership team
- ensuring that the Governors have access to high quality training, professional development and support.

The Trust Board will provide regular updates to LGBs via the following:

- Sharing approved Minutes of each Trust Board meeting.
- Providing regular updates on all Policies that are reviewed and approved by Trustees, Trustee Committees and the Executive Team.
- The Chairs Forum
- The Clerks Forum.

In addition, each Trustee Committee allows for up to 2 Local Governors to join: these Local Governors are outside of Quorum but allow for LGB voice into each Committee.

5. Constitution of Local Governing Bodies

Each LGB comprises members (**Local Governors**), including:

- the Head Teacher of the Academy and/or Chief Executive Officer];
- at least two elected parents or guardians of a pupil at the Academy (**Parent Local Governors**); Elected by the parents etc.
- up to two employees of the Academy comprising teacher members and/or non-teaching staff members elected by employees of the Academy
- such other members as the Trustees decide.

Each LGB shall have a Chair and a Vice-Chair appointed by the Trustees. Any change to the structure of Governance should be reported to the Governance Professional for review by the Trustees.

The length of service of all Local Governors (including the Chair and Vice-Chair) shall be four years, renewable for a further four years. The maximum number of terms will be 2 terms (8 years) unless there are specific reasons why a Governor should serve for longer.

Every person wishing to become a Local Governor will be required to sign a declaration of acceptance and of willingness to act as a Local Governor or as prescribed by the Trustees from

time to time, and shall make disclosures for the purposes of a criminal records check by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

6. Commitment of Local Governors

Local Governors are asked to:

- prepare for and make an active contribution at meetings of the LGB;
- champion the School in the local community;
- familiarise themselves with the School's policies;
- visit the School both during school hours (with prior arrangement with the Head Teacher) and for evening events to get to know the School and to be visible to the School community; and
- attend training sessions for Local Governors, where deemed necessary.

7. Appointment and particular responsibilities of Local Governors

a) Chair

The Chair is appointed by the Trustees. The Trustees will not unreasonably reject a Chair nominated by the Local Governors. The term of office of the Chair is one year, but the Chair is eligible for reappointment at the end of that term.

The Board of Trustees are entitled to remove the Chair from office at any time, although this would be without prejudice to the individual's position as a Local Governor.

The responsibilities of the Chair include the following:

- to chair meetings of the LGB;
- to set the agenda for meetings with the Head Teacher and Vice-Chair;
- to report to the Trustees in writing following each LGB meeting, if requested;
- to ensure minutes (taken by the Clerk) provide an accurate summary of the meeting, and provide "headlines" from the meeting to Trustees; and
- to provide a direct link between the LGB and the Trustees.

In the event of a need to make genuinely urgent decisions between meetings on matters falling within the remit of the LGB, the chair of Trustees, in consultation with the Chair of the LGB (or the Vice-Chair of the LGB in his or her absence), shall take appropriate action on behalf of the LGB. The decisions taken and the reasons for urgency shall be explained fully at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees and of the LGB.

b) Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair is appointed by the Trustees. The term of office of the Vice-Chair is one year, but the Vice-Chair is eligible for reappointment at the end of that term.

The Trustees are entitled to remove the Vice-Chair from office at any time, although this would be without prejudice to the individual's position as a Local Governor.

The responsibilities of the Vice-Chair include the following:

- to deputise for the Chair in their absence;
- to set the agenda for meetings of the LGB with the Chair, if requested; and

- to provide a link between the LGB and the Trustees.

In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair at a meeting, the LGB will elect a temporary chair from among their number.

c) Staff Local Governors

The teacher member of the LGB shall be elected by the teaching staff at the Academy.

The non-teaching staff member of the LGB shall be elected by the non-teaching members of staff of the relevant Academy.

The responsibilities of the Staff Local Governors are to represent the interests of the Academy, its students and other stakeholders and in doing so they may put forward the opinions of teaching and non-teaching staff at the Academy to the LGB.

d) Parent Local Governors

Parent Local Governors for each LGB shall be elected in accordance with the process set out below:

- When a vacancy arises, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the School seeking nominees for the vacancy. Nominees will be asked to provide a short statement about why they are interested in being a Parent Local Governor and their background and experience that makes them suitable for the role.
- In the event that the number of nominees equals or is less than the number of vacancies on the LGB, the LGB can choose to appoint all (or any) of those nominated
- If there are more nominees than places available, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the School asking them to vote for their preferred candidate.

A Parent Local Governor should be a parent of a registered pupil at the relevant School or where this is not reasonably practical, a person who is the parent of a child of compulsory school age.

The responsibilities of the Parent Local Governor are to represent the interests of the School, its students and other stakeholders and in doing so they may put forward the opinions of the Parent Body of the School to the LGB.

e) Other responsibilities

Each LGB shall appoint from among its members individuals with specific responsibilities which shall include:

- a Local Governor with responsibility for special educational needs.
- a Local Governor with responsibility for safeguarding.
- a Local Governor with responsibility for pupil premium
- a Local Governor with responsibility for Careers (secondary schools only).

The LGB shall appoint other Link Governors where required to ensure sufficient monitoring takes place. Further information on Link Governors is included in the Scheme of Governance.

f) Clerk to the Local Governing Body

The Trustees shall appoint a Clerk to the LGB who may not be a Local Governor. In the absence of the Clerk, the LGB shall elect a replacement for the meeting.

The responsibilities / functions of the Clerk to the LGB are as follows:

- convene meetings of the LGB including sending notices and papers of meetings.
- attend meetings of the LGB and ensure minutes are produced.
- maintain a register of members of the LGB and report any vacancies to the LGB.
- maintain a register of Local Governors' attendance at meetings and report on non-attendance to the LGB.
- report to the LGB as required on the discharge of the Clerk's functions.
- perform such other functions as shall be determined by the LGB from time to time.

8. Ceasing to be a Local Governor

A Local Governor's term of office will be terminated if:

- any event or circumstance occurs which would disqualify them from the office of Local Governor under the Articles
- any event or circumstance occurs which would disqualify them from the office of Trustee under the Articles were they to hold such office;
- they have, without the consent of the LGB, failed to attend LGB meetings for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first such meeting they failed to attend and the Chair and the Vice Chair agree that the term of office should be terminated; or
- they resign from office by notice to the Trust.

9. Convening meetings of the Local Governing Body

Meetings of the LGB will be held in each term.

The Clerk to the LGB shall give written notice of each meeting and circulate an agenda and any reports or other papers to be considered at the meeting at least seven clear days in advance of each meeting. The Agenda shall be determined by the Athelstan Trust LGB Agenda Planner.

However, where the Chair determines there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice of the meeting states that fact and the notice, copy of the agenda and other papers are given within such shorter period as the Chair-directs.

Any two Local Governors may call a meeting by giving written notice to the Clerk, which includes a summary of the business they wish to carry out. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to convene a meeting as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Local Governors may invite persons who are not Local Governors (such as a member of a committee, any employee, any pupil, any professional adviser and any experts of any kind) to attend the whole or part of any meeting for purposes connected with the meeting.

10. Voting at meetings of the Local Governing Body

The quorum for meetings of the LGB and for any vote on a matter at such meetings is one half of the total number of Local Governors in office at that time (rounded up to the nearest whole number).

Every question to be decided upon at a meeting of the LGBs shall be determined by a majority of the votes of Local Governors present and voting on the question. Votes tendered by proxy shall not be counted.

Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair has a casting vote.

11. Personal interests of Local Governors

Local Governors shall complete a register of their business interests, which shall be reviewed annually.

Any Local Governor who has any duty or personal interest that conflicts or may conflict with his or her duties as a Local Governor shall:

- disclose that fact to the LGB as soon as he or she becomes aware of it. A Local Governor must absent himself or herself from any discussions of the LGB in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the School and such duty or personal interest;
- withdraw from any meeting for that item unless expressly invited to remain in order to provide information;
- not be counted in the quorum for that part of any meeting; and
- withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

12. Minutes

Attendance at each LGB meeting, issues discussed and recommendations for decisions shall be recorded and the minutes signed by the Chair at the next meeting of the LGB. The written record (once approved by the chair of the relevant LGB meeting) shall be forwarded by the Clerk to the LGB to the Clerk to the Trustees as soon as is reasonably practicable.

13. Committees of the Local Governing Body

The establishment of any LGB committees other than temporary, ad hoc committees required to deal with specific issues, must be agreed in advance by the Trustees.

14. Alterations

This constitution and these terms of reference may be altered by a majority resolution of the Trustees of the Academy Trust.

15. Circulation list

This constitution and these terms of reference shall be circulated to Trustees of the Academy Trust, all Local Governors, the Clerk to the LGB, and others at the discretion of the Chair of the Trustees of the Academy Trust or the Chair of an LGB.