The Athelstan Trust

Standards Committee Terms of Reference

1 Purpose of the Standards Committee

1.1 The Standards Committee is a Committee of the Athelstan Trust Board. The purpose of the Committee is to support the Trust in its responsibilities by advising the Board on the impact of strategy in relation to educational standards and other matters relating to teaching and learning.

1.2 The Committee will review and challenge educational provision and standards of education, including attainment and progress data, and the behaviour and personal development of students across the Trust.

1.3 Where appropriate the Committee will report findings to the Trust Board following each Committee meeting as a critical element of the trust's annual reporting requirements.

2 Membership

2.1 The Committee will be formed from at least 2 Trustees and at least 1 Local Governing Board Governor (the number of Governors to remain less than the number of Trustees). The Chair of the Committee will be a Trustee. The membership will be discussed on an annual basis and the Chair shall be appointed at that meeting.

2.2 Chair's term of office shall be one year as this appointment is voted upon annually (see 2.1 above).

2.3 The Committee may invite non-voting specialists who are not Trustees to advise on specific areas, for such a period of time as required the Committee.

2.4 Employees of the Trust should not be Standards Committee members but the CEO, Director of Education and members of the school improvement team, are non-voting advisors to the Committee. Other staff (including Headteachers) and Chairs of Governors will be invited as appropriate at the direction of the Committee.

2.5 Any Trustee may attend a meeting of the Standards Committee, including those who are not members of the Standards Committee.

3 Delegated Power

3.1 The Committee is authorised to invite attendance at its meetings persons to assist or advise on a particular matter or range of issues, including members of Trust staff, but staff will not be present where there is a potential conflict of interest in relation to their own remuneration.

3.2 In the event of a need to make urgent decisions between meetings, the Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the CEO and the Trust Chair, will take appropriate action on behalf of the Committee. The decisions taken and the reasons for urgency will be minuted and explained fully at the next meeting of either the Audit and Risk Committee or the Trust Board as appropriate.

3.3 The Committee is authorised to investigate any activity within its terms of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board including to (a) request any information it requires from any employee or other assurance provider; or (b) obtain outside legal or independent professional advice it considers necessary with approval of the Trust Board.

3.4 The Committee does not have its own budget and has no remit for capital expenditure; legal commitments are made with the prior delegated consent of the Trust Board.

4 Quorum and Decision by Consensus

4.1 It is generally expected and encouraged that decision making by the Standards Committee should be by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be referred to the Board for resolution.

4.2 This is subject to any member of the Committee having an interest, loyalty or duty that conflicts, or is reasonably likely to conflict, with the interests of the Committee. In such cases the Committee member must declare his or her interest for the particular item.

4.3 The quorum for the Committee shall be two Trustees.

5 Meetings

5.1 The Standards Committee will meet at least four times a year or more frequently as circumstances require. Meetings will usually be held in person, but may be joined online. The Committee Chair shall also convene a meeting at other times if considered necessary or upon the reasonable request of any Committee member.

5.2 Meetings will be scheduled by the Governance Professional with advice from the CEO, Chair of the Committee and School Improvement Team to align with major decision points for the Trust.

5.3 The Governance Professional shall attend and service Committee meetings, including circulating the agenda and papers before each meeting, and preparing the minutes.

5.4 The Chair will set the agenda for the Committee meetings in conjunction with the Governance Professional and relevant staff.

5.5 Meetings will be chaired by the Chair of the Committee. In the absence of the Chair, the Committee will elect a temporary replacement from among the members present at the Committee meeting.

5.6 In the absence of the Governance Professional the Committee will approve a replacement for the meeting.

5.7 The Governance Professional will circulate an agenda for each meeting and papers at least a week before each meeting.

5.8 At the start of each meeting, Committee members will be asked to declare any interests in agenda items.

5.9 Attendance at each meeting, matters discussed and recommendations for decisions will be recorded. The written record of each meeting will be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

6 Reporting

6.1 The Chair will report any actions to the Trust Board requiring ratification.

6.2 The Committee will review at least once a year with the Board its constitution and Terms of Reference and recommend any changes necessary to the Board.

6.3 The Committee will report back to the Trust Board after each Committee meeting.

7 Key Responsibilities

Local Governing Bodies will undertake detailed analysis of their own individual school performance. This Committee will focus upon comparative performance to understand any variations in performance, patterns or trends, and to enable identification of best practice and areas for development within individual schools or across the Trust.

The Standards Committee will:

7.1 Receive reports on the activities and impacts of the Director of Education and School Improvement Team in their work to:

- deliver the aims of the Strategic Plan, including where workplans are being implemented
- improve standards of teaching and learning across the Trust.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across the Trust.

7.2 Receive reports on predicted and actual academic outcomes across the Trust, using KPIs, national and local comparators and other data to assess these.

7.3 Identify risks and contribute to the Trust Risk Register, ensuring Committee activities consider high level educational risks.

7.4 Monitor the effectiveness of the approach to and effectiveness of support for vulnerable and disadvantaged students

7.5 Evaluate and monitor the risk of school and / or educational failure (including Ofsted readiness). In consultation with the Board of Trustees, direct further scrutiny and resource, and monitor progress.

7.6 Ensure that Trust delivery of safeguarding activities & support for children aligns with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 & other relevant guidance.

7.7 Be assured that appropriate, high-quality school development plans are written and in place for each school and that these are implemented and regularly monitored.

7.8 Understand arrangements that are in place for monitoring student attendance and behaviour, and be assured of the strategies that are deployed to address these.

7.9 Monitor provision for student mental health and wellbeing

7.10 Other items:

- Consider any other matters where requested to do so by the Trust Board.
- Review and approve any Trust Policies which have been delegated to the Committee in accordance with the Trust's policy review schedule, including the Curriculum Statement.

8 Terms of Reference

8.1 The committee's terms of reference will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the year and any proposed changes referred to the Trust Board for approval. Any additional changes during the year must be referred to the Trust Board for approval.

Approved by the Trust Board: 15th October 2026