



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL
& NOTTINGHAM
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Terms of Reference for Senior Governors (Chairs and Vice Chairs) of Local Governing Bodies

Governing bodies should focus on their core functions:

1. Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent
4. Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Wider leadership responsibilities

1. Senior governors have wider leadership responsibilities associated with their roles and status, such as:
 - being the first points of contact and playing a leading role in employment matters, as required by the procedures established by the Trust - ensuring these are implemented via the Scheme of Delegation (for example, grievance, disciplinary, capability).
 - where required, acting as a first point of contact and respondent in matters raised with the school or Trust by external bodies (such as the local authority or Department for Education).
 - where required, representing the governing body in its dealings with external partners and be an advocate for the school and the Trust.
 - attend school events as appropriate and encourage other governors to do so.

Developing the team

2. Governing bodies need a range of skills and knowledge to carry out their functions effectively. It is the responsibility of senior governors to:
 - ensure the governing body has the required skills and commitment to govern well, and that appointments made, fill any identified skills gaps and ensure a diverse team.
 - ensure all members of the governing body have a thorough understanding of their role and receive appropriate induction and ongoing development as required.
 - ensure that members of the governing body are involved, feel valued and are encouraged to develop as a governor.

- ensure members of the governing body act reasonably and in line with the Governors Code of Conduct.
- develop a good Chair/Vice Chair working relationship, keeping each other fully informed and delegating tasks as appropriate.

Working with school leaders and the Trust

3. Senior governors should develop effective working practices which are mutually supportive. It is the responsibility of senior governors to:
 - ensure that the governing body fulfils its duty of care to the headteacher and staff, including ensuring a safe and secure working environment, a reasonable work-life balance, and support for their wellbeing.
 - ensure all governing body members concentrate on their strategic role and hold the headteacher to account.
 - build and encourage a professional relationship with the headteacher and the Trust which allows for honest conversations, acting as a sounding board and ensuring there are no surprises at meetings.
 - meet/communicate regularly as senior governor colleagues and with the headteacher as required.
 - Attend the GKIT termly meetings (or where this is not possible, ensure academy representation).
 - attend the SNMAT Senior Governors termly meeting (or where this is not possible, ensure academy representation).
 - attend the SNMAT Termly Governance Forum (or where this is not possible, ensure academy representation).
 - attend/ensure academy representation at the SNMAT Board of Director's meetings, at least once a year.
 - engage with and support the Trust wide work to develop governance, ensuring that academy views are shared.
 - support the wider ethos and values of the Trust in respect of collaboration and peer support for governor colleagues across SNMAT.
 - oversee and participate in the headteacher's performance review, according to the Scheme of Delegation, ensuring that appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) is provided.
 - ensure that the headteacher provides staff with an understanding of the role of the local governing body and acts as link between the two

Leading governance business

4. Senior Governors play a key role in the smooth and effective running of governance business/meetings and are recommended to:
 - meet termly with the business/office manager, headteacher [and clerk for the full governing body meeting where applicable] to:
 - plan the accountability panel and full governing body meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the key responsibilities and strategic priorities and reduce unnecessary paperwork,
 - establish and communicate who is responsible for completing the statutory and administrative governance tasks each term – using the SNMAT Meeting Cycle planning document as a guide.
 - promote an open culture on the governing body that allows ideas and discussion to thrive while ensuring clear decisions are reached as quickly as possible.
 - ensure that decisions taken at the meetings of the governing body are implemented.
 - ensure that complaints made to the governing body are dealt with in a timely and effective manner using the SNMAT complaints policy.

All Governors must ensure they:

- Read and sign the SNMAT Governor Code of Conduct.
- Complete annually, the on-line Safeguarding training for governors, facilitated by Hays.
- Complete their declarations of interest on an annual basis and as changes occur, indicating the starting date.