

## 1. Purpose and scope

1.1 Academy Committees are not responsible for operational issues.

They act as a 'critical friend' by monitoring and providing support and challenge in the following areas:

- SEN
- Curriculum
- Community

## 2. Composition and membership of the Academy Committee

2.1 Each Academy Committee shall have a Chair. Each Academy Committee Chair shall only take up the role once their appointment is approved by the Trust Board. Each Academy Committee chooses the person they wish to nominate as Chair and to be approved by the Trust Board. The term of their post is one year. They may be put forward for approval for a further year, but the Chair should serve no more than six years as Academy Committee Chair. The Trust Board has the right to appoint a Chair of its choosing should a suitable candidate not be identified or if it does not approve the nominated Chair or alternative put forward by the Academy Committee.

2.2 Each Academy Committee shall have a Vice Chair. The Vice Chair will be elected by the Academy Committee annually and lead the meeting in the absence of the Chair. In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number, but this shall not be the Headteacher.

2.3 The Headteacher or designated member of the SLT of each school shall be a member of the Academy Committee that serves the school of which they work. This position may be on a rota basis.

2.4 Parent/carer representatives - The SECAT Articles of Association require an election to be held and in the absence of candidates, they can be nominated. Subject to vacancies, each Academy Committee can nominate up to two parent/carer representatives for primary schools and up to three for secondary schools or joint Academy Committees. As per the SECAT Articles of Association, article numbers 46c and 53-56, there is no requirement for Academy Committees to appoint parent/carer representatives. Appointments are approved by the Trust Board. To be eligible as a representative, the person must be a parent/carer of a child who attends the school that the Academy Committee serves or one of the other schools within the MAT. The term of their post is four years.

A parent/carer representative:

- a) May choose to serve to the end of the term of their post, even if their child leaves the school.
- b) Must leave their post if they become employed by the Trust
- c) Should have a willingness to serve the Academy Committee
- d) Should have useful skills and/or experience to assist and support the school and the Academy Committee

2.6 Each Academy Committee shall have a minimum of three community representatives. The term of their post is four years. They are:

- a) Nominated by the Academy Committee representatives but their appointment must be approved by the Trust Board
- b) They may be a parent/carer of a child at another school within the MAT
- c) They must not be a member of staff of the Trust
- d) Should have a willingness to serve the Academy Committee
- e) Should have useful skills and/or experience to assist and support the school and the Academy Committee.

2.7 Academy Committee Representatives are permitted to serve a maximum of two terms.

2.8 Each Academy Committee shall have a governance professional to support. The governance professional shall be appointed by the Trust Board and will usually be the Trust Governance Advisor who reports to the Trust Governance Manager. If a governance professional cannot be present at an Academy Committee meeting, the Governance Manager will arrange for another person to attend and take notes of proposed actions. The role of the governance professional is to:

- a) Take minutes of the meeting
- b) Send to the Academy Committee Representatives the finalised approved minutes of the Trust Board meetings
- c) Arrange the Academy Committee meetings
- d) Disseminate the papers in advance of the Academy Committee meetings.
- e) Agree the agenda of the Academy Committee meeting with the Chair of the Academy Committee
- f) Make a record of all proceedings at each meeting. Minutes will be circulated to Academy Committee Representatives within 10 school days of the meeting (or as agreed) and presented with the agenda for the next Academy Committee meeting.

2.9 Each Primary Academy Committee should have a maximum of 9 representatives and each Secondary Academy Committee should have a maximum of 12 representatives. Where an Academy Committee is responsible for multiple schools, there should be a maximum of 12 representatives.

### **3. Quorum**

3.1 The quorum will be three Academy Committee Representatives, consisting of a minimum of two non-staff representatives.

### **4. Conditions of accepting a post as an Academy Committee member**

4.1 Prior to confirmation to the role of Academy Committee member, the proposed member must:

- a) Attend as directed with identification as directed to complete an application for an Enhanced Check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (a 'DBS check')
- b) Provide their contact details as requested
- c) Read, complete, and sign the Academy Committee Code of Conduct
- d) Read, complete, and sign the Disclosure of Business Interest form produced by the MAT and in particular, read the policy for disclosure of pecuniary interests
- e) Consent to their information being posted on the school website, which is a legal requirement
- f) Commit to completing the induction programme for new Academy Committee Representatives.

4.2 If any prospective Academy Committee Representative:

- a) does not wish to make the applications or disclosures referred to above; or
- b) the result of a DBS check is not clear, then their appointment will not be confirmed and they are not permitted to serve on the Academy Committee.

## **5. Conditions of remaining as an Academy Committee Representative, once elected**

5.1 The Trust Board hopes that once elected and the necessary safeguarding checks are returned and are satisfactory, that each Academy Committee Representative will enjoy an interesting and fulfilling role with their Academy Committee.

5.2 However, there are certain situations where the term of appointment of an Academy Committee Representative can be brought to an earlier end.

5.3 A representative must be removed from post if:

- a) They refuse to undertake a DBS check, or any other safeguarding check directed by the Trust Board.
- b) They fail to attend three Academy Committee meetings in one academic year or a period of six months or more. This results in a mandatory removal from post.

5.4 A representative may be removed from post in the following circumstances:

- a) They are in breach of the Code of Conduct approved by the Trust Board
- b) They are in the employ of the MAT and are the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to their employment
- c) They failed to disclose a material business interest that affects or could be seen to affect their independence in the role of Academy Committee Representative
- d) They provide services to the MAT and there is a dispute between them and the MAT in respect of the services provided
- e) They are in dispute with the MAT in respect of monies due for services rendered by the MAT and/or one of the schools in the MAT
- f) They have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's ethos and have brought or are likely to bring the MAT or the school they serve into disrepute.

## **6. Attending meetings**

6.1 There must be three Academy Committee Representatives in attendance at a meeting consisting of a minimum of two non-staff governors for the meeting to be quorate. If the meeting is not quorate, no business can be undertaken and the meeting must be rearranged. The Trust Board must be notified should this occur, and the Governance Manager will do that.

6.2 The Academy Committee will meet as often as is necessary to fulfil its responsibilities but at least once per academic term. The Governance Advisor will arrange the meetings.

6.3 The Academy Committee Chair sets agenda items with the clerk, taking account of the views of:

- a) the Headteacher

- b) the Governance Manager and Governance Advisor
- c) the Trust Board.

6.4 The CEO and/or the COO may attend and contribute to an Academy Committee meeting.

6.5 Any member of the Trust Board may attend an Academy Committee meeting.

6.6 The Trust Board have resolved that no Trustee should be an Academy Committee member unless approved by the Trust Board and any such appointment will be reviewed every six months by the Trust Board.

6. Resignations (actual or planned) should be announced at meetings. Any resignation does not become formal until accepted and recorded in the meeting minutes.

## **7. What is the remit and role of the Academy Committee?**

7.1 The Academy Committee is effectively the eyes and ears of the Trust Board within the school that they serve. The Academy Committee is asked by the Trust Board to work essentially in three key areas. They are:

- a) SEND
- b) Curriculum
- c) Community

*Please refer to the individual link representative's role descriptions for a list of responsibilities.*

7.2 The Academy Committee will act as a critical friend, to question and monitor, support and challenge.

7.3 On completion of assigned training, Academy Committee Representatives will support the Trust with panel hearings such as:

- a) Behaviour Panel Hearings
- b) Exclusions and Suspensions Panel Hearings
- c) Complaints Panel Hearings (Stage 3)

7.3) The Academy Committee will show best practice in undertaking these responsibilities by:

- 1) Undertaking an annual skills audit to monitor that Academy Committee Representatives have the skills needed to undertake their responsibilities
- 2) Monitoring that the Register of Business Interests is kept up to date
- 3) Engaging with stakeholders, including parent/carers and members of the community
- 4) Producing an annual schedule of business for the Academy Committee
- 5) Completing an annual evaluation of impact of the Academy Committee
- 6) Completing an annual Academy Committee Representative contribution review
- 7) Succession planning for the Academy Committee
- 8) Producing and monitoring CPD for the Academy Committee Representatives

## **8. Terms of Reference**

8.1 Reviewed annually by the Trust Board.