



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

The Diocese of Chelmsford

Vine Schools Trust

Local Governance Role

This policy is a mandatory policy for all Vine Academies and must be implemented with no amendments.



1 What does a member of a Local Governance Body/Local Board do?

- 1.1 The role of a member of local governance is to contribute to the work of the local board/local governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the academy by:
 - 1.1.1 Setting the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the academy within the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust.
 - 1.1.2 Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the academy and its pupils; and
 - 1.1.3 Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

2 As part of the local governance team, a local member is expected to:

- 2.1 Contribute to the strategic discussions at meetings which determine the academy/academies:
 - 2.1.1 the vision within the overall vision of the Vine Trust;
 - 2.1.2 maintaining and developing the Christian ethos of the academy;
 - 2.1.3 clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets;
 - 2.1.4 that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
 - 2.1.5 ensuring acceleration of pupil progress and achievement, particularly for the most disadvantaged pupils, SEND and the more able
 - 2.1.6 the delegated budget, including the expenditure of the pupil and sports premium allocation is appropriate used;
 - 2.1.7 the staffing structure and key staffing policies are developed;
 - 2.1.8 the principles to be used by academy leaders to set other local academy policies.
- 2.2 Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the academy's/academies performance; this includes:
 - 2.2.1 agreeing the outcomes from the academy's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the Academy Priority Plan and SIAMS plan;
 - 2.2.2 considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by academy leaders and external sources on all aspects of academy performance;
 - 2.2.3 asking challenging questions of academy leaders;
 - 2.2.4 ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits;
 - 2.2.5 ensuring senior leaders have implemented Vine policies and developed the required additional policies and procedures and the academy is operating effectively according to those policies;



- 2.2.6 acting as a link local member on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the local board/local governing body on the progress on the relevant academy priority; and
- 2.2.7 listening to and reporting to the academy's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers.
- 2.3 Ensure the academy staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
- 2.4 When required, serve on panels, across all Vine academies, to:
 - 2.4.1 support the Vine Trust Board in appointing the headteacher;
 - 2.4.2 appoint other senior leaders with the headteacher;
 - 2.4.3 support the Vine trust Board in appraising the headteacher;
 - 2.4.4 agree the pay recommendations for staff other than the headteacher;
 - 2.4.5 investigate and hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
 - 2.4.6 hear appeals about pupil exclusions.

3 The role is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

- 3.1 A Local member of a governance board does **not**:
 - 3.1.1 write school policies;
 - 3.1.2 undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety - even if the local governor has the relevant professional experience;
 - 3.1.3 spend much time with the pupils of the academy – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the academy;
 - 3.1.4 fundraise – this is the role of the PTA – the local board/local governing body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks;
 - 3.1.5 undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the local board/local governing body monitors the quality of teaching in the academy by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources;
 - 3.1.6 do the job of the academy staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the local board/local governing body need to consider and rectify this.
- 3.2 As you become more experienced in the role, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g as a chair of a committee). This document does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair and chairs of committees.
- 3.3 In order to perform this role well, a local member **is expected to**:



- 3.3.1 get to know the school, including by visiting the academy occasionally during school hours, and gain a good understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses;
- 3.3.2 undertake the Diocese of Chelmsford online course, 'Church School Governance'; attend induction training as soon as possible, and regular relevant training and development events;
- 3.3.3 attend meetings (local board/local governing body meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting;
- 3.3.4 act in the best interest of all the pupils of the academy; and
- 3.3.5 behave in a professional manner, as set down in the Vine Governance Code of Conduct, including acting in strict confidence.

4 Time commitment:

- 4.1 Under usual circumstances, you should expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on your local governance responsibilities; the top end of this commitment, which equates to about half a day per week in term time, is most relevant to the chair and others with key roles.
- 4.2 Initially, we would expect your commitment to be nearer 10 days a year. However, there may be periods when the time commitment may increase.
- 4.3 Some longstanding local governors may tell you that they spend far more time than this on academy business; however, it is fairly common for local members of governance boards to undertake additional volunteering roles over and above governance.
- 4.4 Under Section 50 of the *Employment Rights Act 1996*, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.
- 4.5 Expenses: Local Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor, and National Governance Association recommends that a governing board should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.

5. Declaration of potential conflicts of interest:

- 5.1 All members of local governance boards must complete and keep up-to-date all declarations of potential conflicts of interest which will be published on each academy websites. A form will be provided by the clerk.



Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

7 'Nolan Principles'

of public life



Adopted by the Local Board of Belchamp St Paul and Ridgewell Primary Schools.
March 2019

