

## School Community Councils

The School Community Councils (SCCs) are advisory councils that report to the Executive Headteacher and/or the Director of Teaching and Learning. It is the role of the SCC to support and strengthen their Headteacher's leadership through robust challenge; to work via the Chair with the Executive Headteacher to hold the Headteacher accountable for the performance of pupils and staff. School Community Councils meet on a termly basis at least three times per year.

The objectives of SCCs are to be accountable to the CEO and Board for:

- Ensuring high standards of teaching and learning
- Ensuring pupil happiness, welfare and safety
- Ensuring efficient, appropriate and compliant use of local finances
- Ensuring school premises are safe and secure and a good learning environment
- Supporting Headteachers as required, for example, in recruitment or performance management
- Ensuring effective engagement within the academy school's local community

The composition of SCCs is determined by the Board of Directors, subject to the Articles of Association. The Chair of the Board of Directors, the CEO, the DTL and the CFO or other Trust executives may attend any SCC meeting.

The Chair of the SCC will be appointed by a resolution of the Board of Directors who will take into account any representations made by the SCC prior to appointment. Each SCC will include parent, community and staff representatives and anyone else co-opted as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors in consultation with the SCC Chair.

Members of any SCC may be invited to attend meetings or sit on an exclusion panel in another of the Trust's academy schools where their particular skills or experience may be of use. Similarly they may be invited to join review or appeals panels relating to personnel and disciplinary matters including the conduct of staff in any of the Trust's academy schools.

### **Key responsibilities and commitments of all SCC members:**

- To ensure that there is local adaptation and adoption of Trust policies and functions as directed by the CEO on behalf of the Board of Directors

- To work with the Executive Headteacher as local intelligence in supporting educational performance and pupil progress
- To support the Headteacher in ensuring compliance
- To be aware of the academy school's performance and challenges through regular visits and good management reporting
- To understand the academy school's strengths and development needs and to agree strategic planning priorities with the Headteacher subject to approval by the Executive Headteacher, CEO, DTL and Board of Directors
- To listen to and ensure effective relationships with pupils, parents and other local schools
- To support the Headteacher to set and uphold high standards of behaviour and conduct for pupils and staff alike
- To reflect and respond to the needs and opportunities within the community
- To contribute to the academy school's development and improvement, and to subscribe to the ethos, aims and objectives of the Trust
- To support the academy school's SLT, staff, pupils and parents through a professional approach to governance in order to help create positive educational change for children
- To subscribe to the creation of an inclusive, safe and supportive educational environment within the academy school
- To develop an understanding of the school improvement process and the role of the SCC in it
- To attend at least one meeting per term, each meeting lasting for up to two hours and taking place in the early evening
- To come well-prepared to meetings having read the meeting papers beforehand and identified any clarification to be sought or questions to be asked; questions can always be emailed to the Headteacher beforehand
- To commit to visiting the academy school for a minimum of one half day per term to take part in a monitoring or other visits in collaboration with a senior member of staff and drafting a brief (one side of A4) visit report afterwards
- To commit to undertake at least one governance training session per year, as agreed with the Chair of the SCC and the Executive Headteacher

In addition and wherever it possible it is desirable that that SCC members are:

- Willing to participate in recruitment interviews as required for members of staff at any level of seniority within the academy school

- Willing to support school activities such as Open Days or evenings, performances by children, fundraising events etc.
- Willing to attend special school assemblies on request such as Carol Service, etc.
- Willing to represent the academy school in local activities or those taking place further afield, e.g. visit other Trust academy schools in order to increase the SCC's collective knowledge and understanding of how other schools address issues pertinent to their academy school's development

The SCCs will work with their Headteacher and with the professional Trust team to ensure:

- Staffing capacity and professional development is appropriate
- Quality assurance is effective and appropriate targets are in place
- Pupil progress meets agreed expectations between the Trust and the academy school, for different groups and in general
- Pupil premium expenditure has an effective impact on reducing gaps between groups and the average
- Pupil applications, admissions, attendance and exclusions information is regularly reviewed
- Every academy school is 'adding value' to each student they educate, and ensure no pupils are left behind
- Staff absence, recruitment and retention is regularly reviewed

The effectiveness of the work of SCCs will be evidenced by:

- Challenging debate at meetings on performance data and school improvement (i.e. in records and reports of meetings) that demonstrate both support and challenge to the Headteacher
- Good parental feedback (through questionnaires and records of other consultation events)
- Good feedback on the impact of the academy in the community (range of evidence sources)
- Demonstrable checks on their own effectiveness using a Trust-wide effectiveness self-audit tool for SCCs

### **Financial Responsibilities of the SCC**

- To provide challenge and support to the academy school throughout the budget preparation process, including when the proposed annual budget is presented to the SCC

- To monitor budget expenditure throughout the year to ensure that any variation from planned expenditure is accounted for and properly managed
- To receive budget-monitoring reports at each meeting and challenge any significant variation from planned expenditure or income
- To ensure that any major expenditure is subject, where appropriate, has regard to Best Value and other Trust guidance on procurement
- To oversee the suitability of arrangements at school level for Safeguarding and for Health and Safety.

### Responsibilities of the SCC regarding Policy Development

- To ensure that a programme of policy development and review is fit for purpose and ensures that the academy school is meeting all compliances
- To implement the programme of receiving policies from the Trust and approving policies is clear and to ensure that it remains fit for purpose at the start of each academic year
- To have a system of reviewing the impact of policies on rising standards and improving the quality of education provided can be judged

### Terms of Reference:

Each SCC exists on behalf of the Board to help ensure the effectiveness of the academy school at a local level. The SCC builds on local expertise, which the Board values as a contribution to ensuring effective local school performance and management. There is to be a minimum of 1 SCC meeting per term, with the Chair reporting to the Executive Headteacher or CEO within 2 weeks of each meeting. In addition to the generic role of a member of the SCC member outlined above, the specific core functions of the SCC have been consolidated into 6 portfolios with each being assigned to one member of each SCC. Note that it is for the Chair of the SCC in dialogue with the SCC members and the Headteacher to determine how these portfolios are carried out, including sharing them, 'buddying' two portfolio holder or any other strategy that is deemed effective.

The core functions are as follows with the individual portfolio given in brackets:

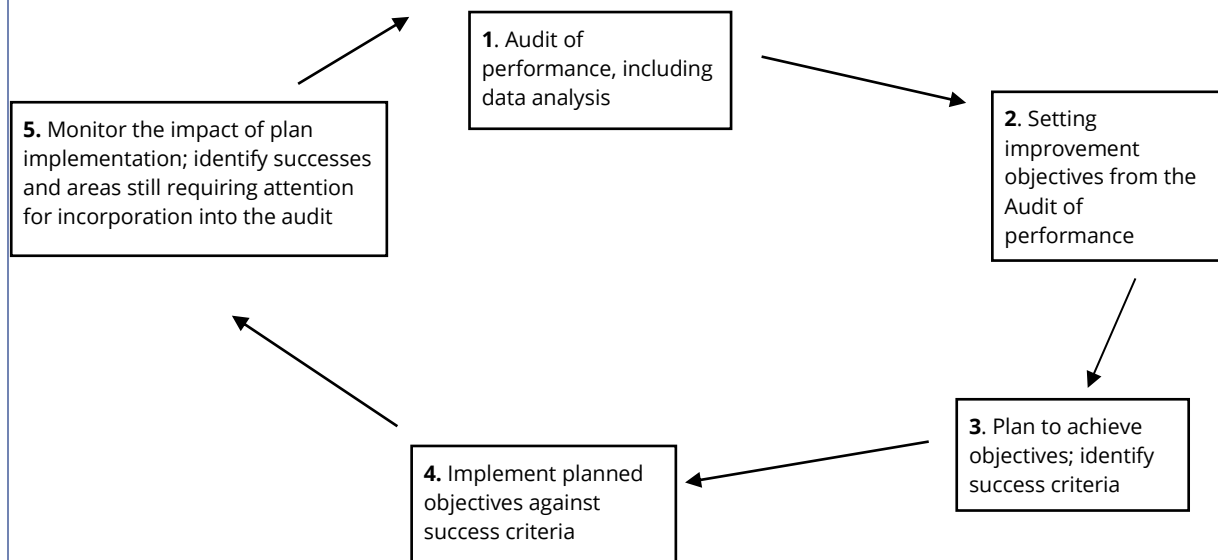
**1. Teaching, Learning and Performance Portfolio** (to raise standards of teaching and learning). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- Have a clear understanding of historical and in-year data and nationally published performance data such as RAISEonline, and the Inspection

Dashboard.

- Discuss in half-termly meetings with nominated data and assessment manager from the school, following the scheduled data capture points:
  - Overall standards of attainment
  - Standards of identified groups e.g. CLA, PP, SEND
  - Whether the academy school is on track to meet its targets
- Take part in some WILOs (*Weeks In The Life Of*), School Reviews to triangulate other information and other visits linked to the School Improvement Plan and write brief visit reports for the SCC
- Set the focus with the Headteacher for SCC Open Days
- Invite appropriate staff to make presentations to SCC meetings
- Ensure the funding of pupil premium children is used effectively to raise standards by monitoring their progress of these and other vulnerable groups.
- Work alongside Senior Leadership Team of the academy school and professional Trust team to produce effective School Improvement Plans based on a cycle of needs analysis, planning and review (see School Improvement Cycle below)
- Use this information to ensure that the SEF fully and accurately reflects the current strengths and areas of developments in the schools

**School Improvement Cycle**



**2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Portfolio** (to ensure pupil happiness, welfare and safety). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- Meet with different groups of pupils in different contexts to ascertain levels of well-being, e.g. lunch times, school council, peer mediation, playground duty.
- Triangulate the quality and effectiveness of pupil voice strategies in the academy school
- Monitor the accident book and meet with appropriate welfare person
- Review the academy school's overarching safeguarding and child protection procedures policies, documentation, training records, self-evaluation and potential action plans and to ensure they meet all statutory requirements.
- Ensure all training records for child protection, PREVENT, safer recruiting are up to date
- Check the racial abuse returns
- Be aware of children in vulnerable groups
- Ensure that a safeguarding report on all the above points is included in the Chair's termly report to the Executive Headteacher

**3. Finance and Audit Portfolio** (the efficient, appropriate and compliant use of local finances). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- Attend half-termly meetings with School Business Manager to review and discuss monthly reports in order to
  - understand the current financial profile and challenges of the school
  - become aware of any variation from the school's planned expenditure and the reasons for such variation
  - understand the processes of Best Value, financial benchmarking, and gaining value for money within the framework of the Trust policies and financial and procurement practices
  - check that the school has responded appropriately to any audit recommendations
  - be able to effectively report to SCC on main headlines
- Work alongside the School Business Manager and CFO to draft an initial budget, taking into consideration the priorities of the School Improvement Plan and support the Headteacher in the presentation of this budget to SCC

**4. H&S and Premises Portfolio** (to ensure school premises are safe and secure and a good learning environment). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- To work with the Premises Officer to draw up a Premises Development Plan including a suggested and budgeted rolling programme for essential maintenance, redecoration and capital development
- Undertake a termly walk around the entire academy school premises with Premises Officer to gain familiarity with the layout and the short term and long term challenges of the site and report back to SCC meetings
- Maintain an overview of premises costs in discussion with School Business Manager
- Check and monitor security and safety compliance including water testing, fire drills and other responsibilities
- Maintain a simple site and premises development plan

**5. Senior Leadership Team Liaison and School Support Portfolio** (to support the academy school's management team). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- Support with job interviews as required
- Receive school level complaints
- Ensure SCC local policies are reviewed and their impact is monitored as necessary in consultation with senior leadership team
- Support the senior leadership team with local issues such as parking / school attendance
- Monitor school attendance
- Review staff wellbeing (e.g. work/life balance, job satisfaction, views of workplace) and discuss with Headteacher

**6. Community Engagement and Fundraising Portfolio** (to ensure effective engagement within the school community). The portfolio holder working closely in conjunction with the Headteacher will:

- Attend school events, i.e. new parents meetings, Christmas productions, liaise with Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and attend PTA events
- Develop links with local businesses and community organisations
- Work to promote the school through press and PR
- Review school website and social media for effectiveness and compliance

### Constitution:

The constitution of each School Community Council will comprise the following:

**Headteacher** (to work without Portfolio)

**1 Staff Member** (maximum) (to work without Portfolio)

**1 Parent Member** (minimum)

**1 local Community Member** (minimum)

To be a minimum of 6 and maximum of 9 members on each SCC

Each SCC member should demonstrate experience in one of the following, and each SCC should have a balance of expertise across these areas: education, finance, buildings, health and safety, community engagement and HR.

### Terms of Office:

- The Headteacher will remain on the SCC whilst in post at the school
- Community and Parent members – each term to consist of 3 years
- Staff member – each term to consist of 2 years
- The maximum term of office of each Council member is 3 terms of office; therefore a maximum of 9 years for Community and Parent members, and 6 years for Staff members
- Each member of an SCC will be subject to a DBS check before taking their seat on the Council

### Transition to School Community Councils 2016:

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) in the Trust will cease to exist and will be replaced by SCCs. During the period from 27<sup>th</sup> June to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 existing members of LGBs will be invited to indicate whether or not they wish to be part of SCCs by completing and submitting an application form. This form will help us to audit the skills for the new SCCs and help the new SCC to appoint its portfolio-holders. It is the Trust's hope that all members of LGBs will want to continue to make their valuable contribution to supporting the Trust's schools and will complete an application form. During the period of transition in our local governance arrangements, current members of LGBs who wish to be part of SCCs will complete their terms of office. However, if a member of an LGB does not wish to apply to be part of an SCC and wishes to retire on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 they may do so, by writing before that date to the Chair of their LGB who will then inform the Trust.

The title of those members of LGBs who wish to join the new SCCs will change to that of 'member of School Community Council' on 1 September 2016, and they will complete their LGB term of office. At this point they will be asked to formally apply to be part of the SCC and if successful will start their first 3-year term of office as an SCC member if appointed. Subject to due diligence, the same arrangements will apply to schools



converting and joining the Trust.

**Minutes and Clerking:**

Whilst there is no legal requirement for formal Minutes to be taken of SCC meetings, there are still administration duties to be fulfilled, such as note taking, record keeping, agenda setting, notification of SCC meetings and other events. Administration duties may be fulfilled local level by the SCC staff member, who not carry a portfolio, or by a shared administration person working across the Trust or a number of schools.

To assist with record keeping and to inform the Chair of the SCC's report to the Executive Headteacher or CEO a simple grid template of each meeting would be a sufficient means of note-taking. This would record any pertinent discussions, outcomes and decisions made, actions to be made by whom, and deadlines for completion.

<b>Date Adopted:</b>		<b>Review Date:</b>	
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