THE ROLE OF THE AGC

Introduction

The Trust is one family of academies seeking to fulfil its vision:

'For every child, within our Trust, to experience an excellent education
and to realise their God-given potential to flourish.'

However, each academy is unique; each was established as a church school in the local community to serve that community and each has a vision linked with the Trust vision.

What is the role?

There are 2 key elements to the role of AGCs.

- **Vision and Values:**
  - **Help the academy set and review their local, contextual vision and values, aligned with the Trust's vision**
  - **Monitor and support the academy to ensure the vision is being 'lived out' in every aspect of academy life**
  - **Preserve and further develop relationships with the community, and in particular with the church, in line with the academy's and Trust's vision and values.**
- **Delegated functions:**
  - **Carry out functions which have been specifically delegated to them as formal committees of the Board.**

  Local governors have a vital role in being the 'eyes and ears' of the Trust, to help the Trust to gain assurance that each academy is meeting its obligations. Details of the responsibilities that have been delegated to AGCs can be found in the Scheme of Delegation *(see Governor Hub for document)* and are also set out below.

How AGCs undertake their role

Although AGCs do not hold to account, they fulfil a vital monitoring role through observing, listening and asking appropriate questions.

To effectively monitor and support (including dealing with questions raised by parents), governors need contextual information to help them understand the academy's current position in terms of challenges and causes for celebration. This is provided by the Headteacher in their report – the 'Academy on a Sheet', the format of which can be found on *Governor Hub.* This is shared with governors at each AGC meeting (i.e. 6 times per year).

When monitoring any aspect of academy life governors should also check which policies are applicable and familiarise themselves with those policies.

Following any monitoring, individual governors should feedback their findings and make any recommendations (but not make any judgements) to the Headteacher. They should then prepare a report to share with other governors at the next AGC meeting.

Summary of Responsibilities

Vision and Values
    • **Help the academy set and review their local, contextual vision and values, aligned with the Trust's vision**
    • **Monitor and support the academy to ensure the vision is being 'lived out' in every aspect of academy life**
    • **Preserve and further develop relationships with the community, and in particular with the church, in line with the academy's and Trust vision and values.**

Responsibilities	*Resources, guidance, and training*

AGCs must:
• Periodically review and revise the academy's vision and values and at every opportunity reinforce them
• Monitor if the vision and values are being 'lived out' in all aspects of the life of the academy and the community to see whether, and how, the vision enriches the lives of those in their community
• Support the academy in living out its vision and values
• Build and develop relationships with the whole community and, in particular, the local church.
 	
The AGC achieves this by:
• **Gaining the voice of stakeholders:**
    o all pupils
    o parents/carers
    o staff
    o church and community
	Whilst surveys can have a role to play in obtaining 'the voice', spending time talking to people, listening and getting to know them can produce a far more accurate reflection of the situation. Following the experience of an individual or group of children as they journey

and in particular in relation to the following groups:	through the academy can be a good way of achieving this (e.g. a boy and girl from Reception, KS1 and KS2).
o SEND – observing, asking appropriate questions and listening to understand the experience of: ▪ pupils with SEND and their parents/carers ▪ staff with disabilities and long-term conditions and ▪ the SENCO and other staff supporting those with SEND	Natalie Packer, the Trust's SEND Consultant, has put together a webinar for governors to provide information about SEND: - *An overview of SEND - see Governor Hub*
o Disadvantaged (including PP, looked after and previously looked after children) - monitoring to ascertain whether, for example, the academy's statement in relation to equalities, vision and ethos is reflected in the provision for these children. o Pupils with medical needs.	Academy's equalities statement: - *This is in the appendix to the 'Equalities Information and Objectives' document – see academy website.*
• **As per the SIAMS Schedule, monitor the impact of the academy's vision on pupils and adults and its effectiveness in enabling pupils and adults to flourish.**	All church schools have a SIAMS Inspection which focuses on the impact of the church school's Christian vision on pupils and adults. This involves looking at: • the academy's Christian vision • how effectively the provision reflects this vision; and • how effective this provision is in enabling all pupils to flourish. Church schools employ a variety of strategies appropriate to, and reflective of, their particular context in order to be distinctively and effectively Christian in their character and ethos. SIAMS inspectors therefore do not look for a set template of what a church school should be like, but rather take the particular context of the school into account and base their evaluation on the outcomes rather than the process.

	The Evaluation Schedule has one inspection question*:*
	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish? This is explored through seven strands: • Vision and Leadership • Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills • Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy • Community and Living Well Together • Dignity and Respect • The impact of collective worship • The effectiveness of religious education There are the webinars for governors to train and support them in this aspect of their role. The academy Diocesan Schools Consultant (DSC) works with the Headteacher and governors in the delivery of this training. *Webinars:* - *Vision and Values* - *SIAMS – what it is and why we have it* - *SIAMS – Monitoring and evaluating your school as a church school* - *Church school ethos* - *Local church local school* - *Collective Worship* - *Monitoring RE* *See Governor Hub as to how to access these webinars.*

• **Community engagement**
 	
   o Academy community
       ▪ *Wellbeing -* monitor the wellbeing of both staff and pupils
       ▪ *Support - s*upport the staff. The Chair has a particular role in supporting the Headteacher; being a 'sounding board' and 'critical friend' outside of AGC meetings.
	There is an increasing recognition generally of the importance of wellbeing and good mental health and governors have a role to play in monitoring the wellbeing of both staff and pupils. To assist governors there are the following:
	   - *Webinars on Staff wellbeing and pupil wellbeing – see Governor Hub*
	   - *Monitoring forms for pupil wellbeing and staff wellbeing – see Governor Hub*
	
	The Trust has a Wellbeing Charter, and each academy has its own action plan:
	   - *Trust Wellbeing Charter – see Governor Hub*
	   - *academy action plan – Headteacher to provide.*

o Church community
   Collaborate with the local church to secure:
       ▪ active involvement in the life of the academy e.g., leading collective worship, involvement in delivery of the RE curriculum
       ▪ Chaplaincy i.e., 'presence' in the academy e.g. to support staff wellbeing, attendance at parent events.
	The relationship between local church and church school is not just an historic heritage but should be a living reality. Nurturing and developing this relationship is of mutual benefit to the academy and church and often a pathway to wider community engagement.
	
	See above for webinar on 'Local church local school'
	
	Our Diocese is part of the 'Growing Faith Adventure' which *'seeks to bring together the three spheres of church, school, and household – in how we think and in what we do. It is not another project but rather a new way of thinking about how we engage with children, young people and families.'*
	The *Faith in the Nexus* research report identifies how church primary schools, in collaboration with churches and other interested groups, facilitate opportunities for children's exploration of faith/spiritual life

	in the home. It offers a vital contribution to understanding the connection between home, school and Church and children's spiritual lives. Download their report here: http://nicer.org.uk/ and watch these 2 short Faith in the Nexus animations:
	- This animation asks questions about the spiritual flourishing of young people https://youtu.be/RGNXewx4wtQ - This animation is for parents and their part in supporting their child's spirituality https://youtu.be/fI-iXfQMqfE
o *Local community* Develop engagement with the local community: - explore ways of strengthening community links and taking social action - Help and support pupils in being courageous advocates for change locally, as well nationally and globally (this links to the above SIAMS strands).	Examples of how this might be achieved are: - participating in local community projects and initiatives - possibly making the academy premises available for community use - engaging pupils in local community initiatives e.g. food banks, litter picking, visiting the elderly etc.

Delegated functions
- **Carry out functions which have been specifically delegated**

Policies • Approve the appendix to Trust Tailored Policies • Approve Academy Level Policies.	There are 3 levels of policies in the Trust: • Trust policies - these apply across the Trust and require no adjustment by academies • Trust Tailored Policies – these apply across the Trust, but the academy is required to complete the appendix, which contains academy specific context and information • Academy Level Policies – these are academy specific and produced by individual academies. *For all Trust policies – see Governor Hub* *For all Trust Tailored Policies and Academy Level Policies – see academy website.*
SEND • Monitor the academy's provision for pupils with SEND and staff with disabilities • Support the academy in producing and publishing the SEN Information Report – this is the role of the nominated governor for SEND.	Natalie Packer, the Trust's SEND Consultant, has put together webinars for governors and there is a wealth of other information on SEND: - *The role of the governor with responsibility for monitoring SEND – see Governor Hub* - *SEND guidance - see Governor Hub* - *SEN report – see academy website.*
Safeguarding • Monitor safeguarding in line with PDET's approach to Safeguarding.	The Trust wide approach to safeguarding is outlined in one document, which governors should read for information and to understand how their role fits into the overall offering: - *PDET's approach to Safeguarding – see Governor Hub*

	This is a very important role and, to assist, a Trust form has been prepared for governors to use for monitoring. It will be noted that any actions arising from the academy's annual - self-evaluation are covered on this form:
	- *Governor safeguarding monitoring form – see Governor Hub*
	All governors **must** read part one of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Trust's Safeguarding Policy:
	- *Latest version of KCSIE – see Governor Hub*
	All governors should undertake safeguarding training on, at least, an annual basis and Headteachers will provide links to appropriate training on the Key.
	Safeguarding training on the Key – see guidance for access to this training on Governor Hub.

Admissions and appeals
• Admission arrangements
   o Propose, and undertake consultation on, changes to the academy's admission arrangements e.g. change in oversubscription criteria etc.
   o Ensure admission arrangements are published on the academy website
 	
• Determining admissions
   o Rank applicants for places in EYFS (Year 3 - Junior School) in February each year
   o Throughout the year, make in-year admission decisions
   o Consider applications and make decisions if an academy receives a request from a parent / carer to defer applying for a place for their child
	Webinar on admissions – see Governor Hub
	Advice and support on admissions and appeals is provided by the Central Team – call Elizabeth McLaverty or Helen Buckley
	Model admission policy – see Governor Hub
	
	Template documents for requests to defer entry - see Governor Hub.

• Appeals – make arrangements for dealing with appeals.	*Appeals are arranged through the Diocese, but the school has to prepare and present a statement of case. The Headteacher prepares the case and Elizabeth McLaverty has templates to assist, should they be required. The case can be presented by either the Headteacher or a governor.*
Data Protection - GDPR • Monitor the implementation of the academy's GDPR action plan.	*Webinar for governors on GDPR - see Governor Hub* *Governor monitoring form template – see Governor Hub.*
Health & Safety • Monitor Health & Safety - governors are responsible for helping monitor the health and safety and security of the academy site on behalf of the Board. The AGC achieves this by: Supporting the academy in ensuring that the premises are maintained in good repair.	It should be noted that, governors are only responsible for monitoring rather than stating (or carrying out) what needs to be specifically done in terms of addressing the issue (so as to avoid inadvertently assuming liability). For example, if on a walkabout a governor noticed that there was a loose wire their role is solely to point it out. *Monitoring form for governors – see Governor Hub* *Academy to provide Asset management plan*
Equalities • Monitor application of the academy's equalities statement • Ensure that the equality information and objectives, as set out in the Trust and academy statements, are published and communicated throughout the academy, including to staff, pupils and parents / carers.	Governors need to ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of the 'Equality Information and Objectives' document. This is the Trust's equalities statement, but it also incorporates the individual academy's statement, and details the AGC specific role. *'Equalities Information and Objectives document' – see the academy website.*

	Guidance on completing the academy statement – see the 'Equality Information and Objectives' document on Governor Hub. Governors need to look for evidence that what is documented in the academy's statement is happening in practice.
Sports premium • Monitor the academy's use of the sports premium.	Governors' monitor: • how much is received • how it is spent (including seeking assurance that it is spent on what it should be); and • very importantly, what the impact is on the pupils' breadth of educational experiences and the development of healthy lifestyles. *Sports premium information – see academy website.*
Risk assurance In conjunction with the Headteacher: • identify academy contextual risks • prepare a risk register documenting the identified risks • monitor the risk register in AGC meetings • report 'notifiable' risks to the Central Executive Team.	*Guidance on identifying risks, a template risk register and the Trust's Risk Management Policy – see Governor Hub.*
Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) • Monitor the administration of SATs.	*Guidance on monitoring SATs – see Governor Hub.*
Marketing • In conjunction with the Headteacher, find ways to promote the academy and attract pupils to ensure future sustainability in the community.	This could involve for example, visiting pre-schools/nurseries, organising events, leaflet dropping, social media presence, all with the aim of promoting the academy.
Exclusions	

• Provide the necessary panel in the event of an exclusion.	*Trust Exclusions Policy – see Governor Hub.*
Complaints • Support the academy by undertaking investigations and providing appeal panels • Support the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team in reconciliation, where appropriate.	*Trust Complaints Policy – see Governor Hub.*
Recruitment support • Support the academy on interview panels for recruitment of staff at levels below Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, if governors are safer recruitment trained.	*Safer Recruitment training is available through the Trust and should be refreshed every 3 years – see Governor Hub for details of when courses are being held or governors can contact the Central Team for details.*