

Statement of Governance 2024/25

Mission

We are passionate about potential. Our mission is to realise the unique talents and abilities of children and young people in all our schools.

Ambitious for every child, we work tirelessly to support them throughout their educational journey and to equip them with the confidence and skills they need to progress and succeed at every level.

We recognise and respect the rich diversity, individuality and strengths that our different schools bring to our wider community.

Our ambition is to continue strengthening our network of schools by:

- Celebrating our diversity
- Promoting excellence
- Enabling personal development, achievement and progression
- Safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and staff.

Vision

Our vision is to create a future where

every child, in every school, can flourish every day

Values

Our group of schools has a shared aim of providing outstanding education and supporting pupils to become purposeful adults, who will contribute to society in a positive way.

As a Trust, we support each of our schools to grow and develop, while celebrating the successes and distinctiveness of each of them.

We are a values driven organisation and our vision is built on five core foundations of **Success, Teamwork, Achievement, Respect, Service** our STARS Values.

As part of the London & South East Education Group, our Group Strategy is to **Transform lives through the power of learning.**

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Members

Members of London South East Academies Trust (LSEAT) are responsible for ensuring the Trust achieves its objectives, as well as compliance with charity and company law and funding agreements. They ensure that they use their discretion regarding their use of the academy's funds reasonably, taking into consideration guidance on accountability or propriety.

Members comprise of:

- the original signatories to the company's Memorandum of Association
- additional members appointed and removed by special resolution of the existing membership.

The role of members includes:

- (i) overseeing the achievement of the objectives of the trust as set out in the articles of association and amending its articles of association when required
- (ii) taking part in annual and extraordinary general meetings
- (iii) appointing and removing members and trustees
- (iv) ensuring the financial stability of the trust and approving its accounts
- (v) ensuring compliance with general principles of charity law

Biographies of our Members are published on the LSEAT website.

Trust Board

Our Trustees are both Company Directors and Charity Trustees. The Trust is responsible through its Board of Trustees and Accounting Officer (the Chief Executive Officer) for all financial transactions within delegated authority. Trustees are appointed under the Trust's Articles of Association including being co-opted by Directors.

The role of Trustees includes:

- (i) Settling the strategic direction of the trust and ensuring that the strategies of its academies are clearly defined, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance
- (ii) Exercising the Trust's powers
- (iii) Expending Trust funds for its objects as set out in the articles of association
- (iv) Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the finances of the Trust, including responsibility for budget setting and auditing requirements in respect of academy accounts
- (v) Ensuring the Trust pursues its objects, is compliant with both company and charity law and has due regard for any other relevant legislation or regulations

Biographies of our Trustees are published on the LSEAT website.

The Trust Board has established the following Committees with delegated authority as determined within the Scheme of Delegation.

Group Audit & Risk Committee

The role of the Group Audit & Risk Committee is to assess and provide the Trust Board with an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust for the following:

- (i) Audit arrangements
- (ii) Systems of internal control
- (iii) Risk management arrangements
- (iv) Framework of governance
- (v) Processes for the economic, effective, and efficient use of resources
- (vi) Solvency
- (vii) Procedures for the safeguarding of its assets
- (viii) Compliance with regulatory requirements..

The Audit & Risk Committee of the Trust provides assurances to the Board of Trustees that risks are being adequately identified and managed by, risk review, agreeing programmes of work to address risk and provide appropriate assurance.

The Committee's role, in respect of solvency, will be to advise the Trust Board on its position as a going concern for the financial statements and to give an opinion on the budgetary and financial processes as part of its internal control opinion.

Group Finance Committee

The Group Finance Committee has the following key responsibilities:

- (i) To take a strategic overview of finance and resources in the Trust
- (ii) To ensure the solvency of the Trust.
- (iii) To review and recommend treasury management and reserves policies.
- (iv) To maintain oversight of capital projects.

Group Search and Governance Committee

The Group Search and Governance Committee has responsibility and oversight for

- (i) Recruitment of Trustees and Local Community Governors
- (ii) Training and Development of Trustees and Local Community Governors
- (iii) Skills Audit and assessment of skills needs and gaps in the Board and Local Boards
- (iv) Board Self-Assessment and Review of Board Performance
- (v) Review of succession plans for Board Members
- (vi) Review of Governance Codes of Conduct.

Group Remuneration Committee

The Group Remuneration Committee has responsibility for

- (i) the performance and review of Executive Team remuneration and performance against sector benchmarks
- (ii) the consideration of Executive Team roles and responsibilities.

LSEAT Education Performance & Standards Committee

The Trust Education Performance and Standards Committee has the following key responsibilities:

- (i) To take a strategic overview of curriculum, quality and standards in the Trust.
- (ii) To ensure that the Trust addresses the raising of standards in teaching and learning and student achievement.
- (iii) To monitor academic standards across key performance metrics.
- (iv) To ensure staff training and development is delivered to support improved teaching and learning
- (v) To ensure curriculum intent is implemented with impact.
- (vi) To review academic risks
- (vii) To receive and review reports from Provision Boards.

Terms of reference for Group and Trust Committees are published in the Standing Orders and published on the Trust Website.

Local Governance Arrangements

As part of the Trust's Growth Strategy, the Trust resolved in March 2021 to adopt a provision-based governance model as opposed to a location-based hub model, which will enable the Trust to have a more specialised focus of the Trust's three provision types, Specialist, Alternative Provision & Outreach and Primary.

In addition to the Provision Boards, the Trust has created local governance committees for each school, which will be known as Academy Councils.

The design and development of this model is to ensure that the community and its parents are at the heart of the Trust. The Academy Councils will be the forum where the Trust can ensure community links remain in place, whilst also engaging with local stakeholders. Each school will also have representation on the appropriate Provision Board, as one representative for each school's Academy Council will be a member of the Provision Board.

The Trust Articles of Association permit the establishment of committees, and the level of delegation and functions determined. Where the Trust Board does delegate, it remains responsible and accountable for decisions made. The Trust Board retains overall responsibility and a legal duty for the operation of the Academies and the delivery of

education, with the level of delegation and autonomy, determined through a detailed Scheme of Delegation.

The role of the Provision Board is intrinsic to providing local governance and scrutiny, enabling and assisting the Board of Trustees in the fulfilment of their duties. The Provision Boards, chaired by a Trustee, will play an active part in supporting and challenging the Leadership of the Academies on the quality and standard of education, monitoring risks and progress of pupils.

As an additional level of governance scrutiny each individual Academy will convene an Academy Council. Membership of Academy Councils will comprise Local Community Governors, Parent and Staff Local Community Governors. The Academy Councils will report up to the appropriate Provision Board based on the Academy provision type, which will comprise a representative from each Academy Council

The Trust Board will approve the appointment of Provision Board Chairs and Local Community Governors. The Provision Boards provide focused governance for each Academy, covering up to five Academies within their remit and provide assurance that the Trust Board is connected to its local community and that a local and diverse range of perspectives support decision making.

Focused governance includes monitoring and challenging Academy Leaders on educational standards and academic performance, safeguarding, individual Academies' character and ethos and reviewing the Academies' Risk Register.

The Provision Boards will contribute most effectively to the Trust's vision and values by focusing on the following areas:

- (i) To provide a strategic view of the ethos and culture of each Academy.
- (ii) To act as a critical friend to Academy Leaders, by providing support and advice to the Academies on School Improvement through the monitoring of School Development Plans, the curriculum offer, pupil progress and attainment and overall pupil experience.
- (iii) To hold the Academy to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides as defined by Ofsted.
- (iv) To ensure there are robust safeguarding procedures and associated policies in place to ensure the safety of all pupils.
- (v) To represent the parents and the local community, staying accessible and connected to the communities they serve.
- (vi) To support, demonstrate and actively promote the Trust's vision and values.

The new model of operations and governance was effective from 1 September 2021, and further details of the new governance arrangements are shown below were revised in April 2023 to accommodate growth in specialist provision, with two specialist provision boards, one for SEMH and one for SEND.

Terms of reference for the Local Provision Boards and Academy Councils are published on the Trust website.

