



# THE FULSTON MANOR ACADEMIES TRUST GOVERNANCE MODEL

The Fulston Manor Academies Trust Governance Model is different to the way a governing body in a non-Academy/traditional school undertakes governance.

Essentially, there are two elements to the governance of schools within the Fulston Manor Academies Trust– local governance that is delivered via the local governing body and strategic governance, delivered via the Strategic Board of Directors.

The principle of the Fulston Manor governance model is that local and strategic governance work together; each providing an element of governance that the other cannot. The Strategic Board (SB) cannot have detailed knowledge of operational matters within each school and the Local Governing Body (LGB) cannot be expected to develop policies or make decisions that affect all members of the Trust.

Working together, however, both parties provide a very strong governance model. The notes that follow explain how it works. For more detailed information, reference should be made to the Articles of Association and the Schemes of Delegation.

## LOCAL GOVERNANCE – THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

The LGB normally consists of a mix of people – parents, sponsor nominees, school staff and others selected or co-opted by the LGB themselves. There is an indicative maximum of 15 people on the LGB although a recognition that flexibility may be exercised regarding membership numbers. A member of the SB will sit on the LGB to provide a link back to the Strategic Board. Fulston Manor Academies Trust operates on a principle of subsidiarity, delegating authority wherever possible to local governing bodies.

## THE STRATEGIC BOARD HAS SET UP THE LGBS TO HAVE FOUR KEY ROLES:

- To serve as “champions” of the Mission Statement in the school and the Fulston Manor Academies Trust and to be a “champion” of the local school to the Fulston Manor Academies Trust.
- To act as “a critical friend” to the Headteacher and the school at local level.
- To act as “a sounding board” for the Headteacher and their leadership team, and represent the views of different parts of the school community to influence decision making.
- To continually review the overall impact of the school amongst the people it exists to serve, make suggestions for improvement and ensure that the Fulston Manor Academies Trust ethos remains at the heart of the Academy community.

The main purpose of these four roles is to enable LGBs to be able to express and act on local views and issues – views of parents and the community etc. One of the key purposes of a LGB is to ensure that the school is being a good expression of what and who Fulston Manor Academies Trust is in the

local community. Therefore, these four roles are about ensuring that the Fulston Manor Academies Trust Ethos is “lived” out in the school on a day to day basis; it’s about the personal wellbeing and safety of students, including their progress and achievement, as well as their attendance, behaviour, child protection and other such issues.

## **STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE – THE STRATEGIC BOARD**

Fulston Manor Academies Trust is a multi-Academy sponsor operating through a single legal entity. As such, its Board of Directors are ultimately responsible for everything that goes on within the group.

The Board’s financial, employment, educational and legal responsibilities are delegated, through the CEO, to the Executive Team, who are employed to ensure that the family of Academies is compliant, financially viable and meeting government standards.

Therefore, the Fulston Manor Strategic Board and Executive Team oversee educational policy and practice, the standards achieved, the management and deployment of financial, ICT and human resources, governance and strategic development for the whole family of Fulston Manor Academies.

As a result of this, the Academies Team is able to make sure that best practice is shared across the whole family and that ‘the wheel is not reinvented’ every time a service is required or delivered to an individual Academy. In other words, that maximum efficiency is achieved across the family of Academies.

The Chief Executive Officer acts as the direct line manager for each Headteacher. Through line management of the Headteacher he/she holds each Headteacher to account – a model which provides professional scrutiny in more detail than a traditional governing body is able to achieve. The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for undertaking the performance review of the Headteacher annually and the Chair of the LGB is invited to be part of this.

Strategic Review meetings are held with each Headteacher twice a year. As well as presenting the opportunity for the CEO to question and challenge the Headteacher, the Headteacher is able to question and challenge Directors on the services provided. Members of the Academy Leadership Team may attend as appropriate. These meetings are in addition to the normal review cycle, which operates five times a year.

## **HOW IS FULSTON MANOR GOVERNANCE DIFFERENT?**

Overall, because local and strategic governance have different responsibilities and are required to work together. Specifically, by comparison to a traditional school Governing Body, it means that:

- The LGB’s role is not to “manage” the Academy as such. This is done through the Strategic Board and the Executive Team. As a LGB Member you should have an understanding of strategic issues that impact on the Academy, and be updated on them regularly by the Principal. This will enable you to contribute effectively to decisions required if you need to be involved in, for example, a grievance matter, sit on an exclusion panel or hear an admissions appeal.

- As the Strategic Board and the Executive Team take responsibility for educational standards, legal compliance and financial viability, the LGB then has the time to investigate the standards on the ground, to see how they are working, and explore how the Fulston Manor Academies Trust ethos is being understood and expressed in the way the school operates. As an LGB Member, your view as a parent or as part of the community is vital in this discussion.

## **HOW THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY WORKS**

In undertaking your role as a LGB Member, you will receive a report at each meeting of key performance indicators. This report tells you how the Academy is performing, and gives an update on matters to do with HR and Finance.

As a member of a LGB you are expected to ask questions that will both challenge and support the progress of the school. To help you understand the way the school operates, you will also be invited to become a link officer, for an area of work e.g., Health and Safety, Safeguarding etc. You will be asked to report back to the LGB on that area from time to time.

## **TERMLY AGENDA**

On a termly basis the Executive Team will send out a Master Agenda to all Principals and Clerks of LGBs. We do not insist that all items detailed on the Master Agenda are considered at each meeting, however, some items as will be shown on the agenda, must be covered over the academic year. It is expected that Headteachers and Chairs will work together in customising their agenda with items of a local nature and that whilst the Headteacher reports to the LGB on what has been happening in the school, the LGB may also report on how they have carried out their role with linked responsibilities in key areas such as:

- Visits to the school, e.g. Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Core subject areas, e.g. English, Maths and Science
- Links with the local community and feedback from parents

***A G Brookes  
Headteacher***

***10<sup>th</sup> September 2013***