

# **THE SOUTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ACADEMY**

Local Academy Board (LAB) Handbook  
2025-2026

Guidance to support the effective operation of the  
LAB

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## INTRODUCTION

The Redhill Academy Trust came into being in 2011 as a result of governors and staff at the Redhill Academy supporting the Wheldon School in Carlton, Nottingham. The Redhill Academy had recently been designated as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and was matched with Wheldon who had received an Ofsted 'Inadequate' judgement. This set the ethos of the Trust as a school improvement organisation with the ultimate aim of helping to raise the achievement of local children, whatever their background. Since then, the Trust has only grown as it seeks to support other schools and students.

All academies in the Trust work to the following five principles:

1. High expectations of all students.
2. Valuing and celebrating academic achievement.
3. Outstanding teaching for all students.
4. Widening students' experiences through a range of extra-curricular activities including sports and the performing arts.
5. Commitment to Equality & Diversity.

As a governor in one of the Trust's academies we expect that you will support these principles, whilst challenging, analysing and evaluating the work of the academy you serve.

We hope that this handbook will help you fulfil your role as a governor on one of the Trust's Local Academy Boards. We would also like to thank you for giving up your time to help the Trust improve the achievements, and ultimately, the outcomes of all our students.



**Andrew Burns**  
Trust Principal



**Simon Healy**  
Chair of the Trust Executive Board

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL ACADEMY BOARD (LAB)

As a member of the Local Academy Board, you will share equally with the other members of the board the responsibility of exercising the powers and responsibilities delegated by the Trust Executive Board.

The Local Academy Board has a range of responsibilities:

- Supporting good governance of the school
- Safeguarding and promoting the values of the school
- Supporting the Headteacher of the school and being a critical friend
- Maintaining a detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school
- Regularly reviewing performance and progress, and monitoring data
- Monitoring the achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour, and safety
- Supporting effective financial governance
- Engagement with the school's key stakeholders e.g. parents/carers, pupils and staff
- Reviewing the progress of the Academy's Improvement Plan (AIP).

Areas on which the Local Academy Board supports the governance of the school, offering views and feedback include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Vision, values, and school strategy;
- Student achievement;
- Behaviour;
- Attendance;
- The curriculum;
- School premises development and capital bid priorities;
- Safeguarding;
- Parental engagement;
- Communicating ideas from the community to the Trust Executive Board;
- Promoting parent participation.

The Trust and the school leadership team will support the Local Academy Board by providing information, support, and guidance.

## ROLE OF THE LOCAL ACADEMY BOARD MEMBER

Local Academy Board members offer their experience and expertise to strengthen the decision-making process to support the school's continuous improvement.

Local Academy Boards have some delegated decision-making authority and act as a 'critical friend' for the school. This means:

- They provide support and advice.
  - Acting as a sounding board for ideas
  - Providing feedback on proposals
  - Helping where needed
- They also provide challenge.
  - Asking constructive questions to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of sound information.
  - Exploring alternative proposals

An effective Local Academy Board Member supports the school and wants the school to succeed. An effective Local Academy Board Member has a relationship with the school that means they can also be honest where there are concerns. They have a direct link to the Trust Board should concerns need to be raised.

## COMMITMENT

Being a member of the Board requires commitment. As a Local Academy Board member, there is an expectation that you come to meetings prepared; having read and familiarised yourself with the agenda and any accompanying papers as well as being prepared to ask relevant questions.

There will be opportunities for you to visit the school during the day to help inform the work of the Local Academy Board. Any visit is planned in advance and focused on a consultation area. Your report on the visit will then feed into the consultation response for the school or Trust.

## CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

As a Local Academy Board Member, you will be asked to sign a 'Code of Conduct' and Declaration of Business interests at the first meeting of each Academic year.

- During the meeting, it is expected that all members abide by a set of guiding principles:
- Support and be guided by the Chair of the meeting.
- Respect other people's opinions and ideas.
- Actively participate in discussions.
- Limit the length of individual contributions.

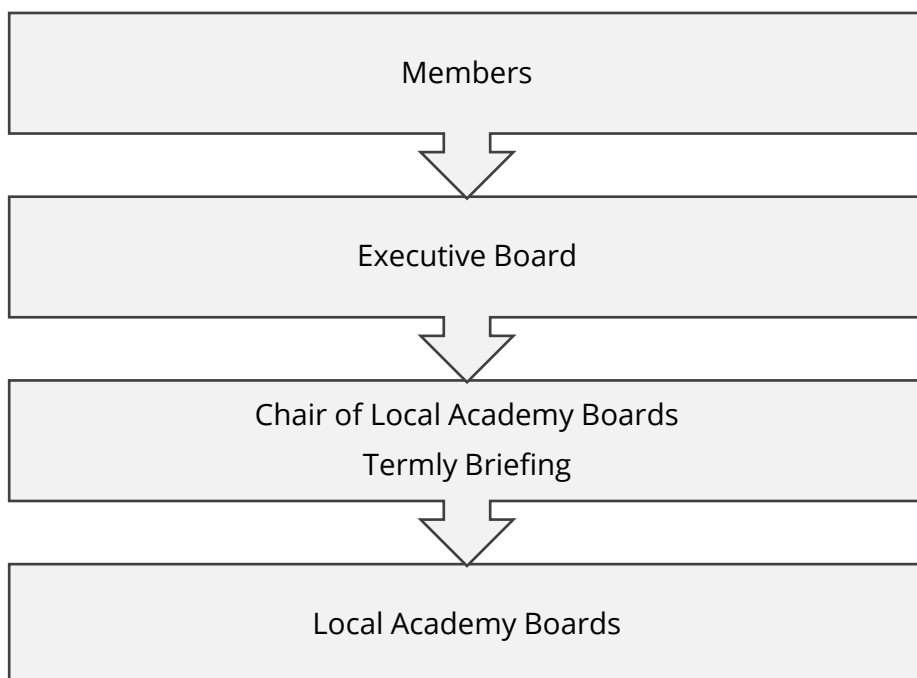
- Ensure contributions are delivered in a positive and constructive manner, even when challenging or difficult issues are being discussed.
- Respect confidentiality.

## SAFEGUARDING

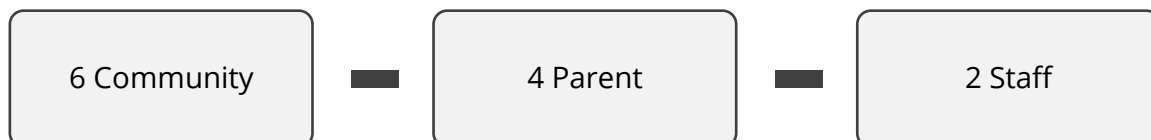
All Local Academy Board members are required to have an up-to-date DBS (Disclosure and Barring Services check), as well as undertake safeguarding training as required.

## MEETING STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

### STRUCTURE:



### MEMBERSHIP<sup>1</sup>:



<sup>1</sup> For further information see the Terms of Reference Section 2.

## **MEETING ORGANISATION**

### **FREQUENCY**

The Local Academy Board will meet a minimum of four times a year. Meetings dates are usually agreed annually and communicated by the Clerk.

### **CLERKING**

The Local Academy Board is clerked by one of the Academy Clerks.

### **CHAIRING**

The Local Academy Board will elect a Chair and Vice Chair at the first meeting of the academic year. Employees of the school are not eligible to stand as Chair or Vice Chair.

The Chair and Vice Chair can resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the LAB Clerk.

## **APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF GOVERNORS**

See Terms of Reference Annex 1

### **MEETING AGENDA**

The Trust Clerk co-ordinates the agenda with input from the Executive Team, Headteacher and the LAB Chair in advance. It is expected that the Headteacher and Chair will work together in customising their agenda. The agenda will be circulated by the Clerk seven days (not including the day of the meeting and the day that the documentation is sent) in advance of the meeting. Supporting papers should also be circulated, where possible, within this time.

### **QUORUM**

To enable an effective meeting to take place there should be at least three members present.

### **VOTING**

Where applicable, voting will take place by a simple majority through a show of hands, with the meeting chair having the casting vote if the decision is split.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

This section of the agenda allows for last-minute items to be discussed. 'Last minute' means things that happened after the agenda was circulated that cannot wait for the next meeting. Members should speak to the Chair before the meeting starts to request an item for discussion under any other business. The Chair will determine if the item can be discussed, if members are not able to discuss something knowledgeably, that item should be deferred to the next meeting.

### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Annually you will be asked to complete a declaration of business and pecuniary interest form. Additionally, at the beginning of each meeting you will be asked to declare any business or other

interests in any item being discussed at the meeting. *Where an interest is declared, you will be asked to leave the meeting whilst that agenda items is discussed, rejoining the meeting afterwards.*

## **MEETING MINUTES**

The Clerk will produce meeting minutes for approval of the Local Academy Board at their subsequent meeting, which will be held centrally.

Items deemed confidential will be minuted & the item will be highlighted in colour and withheld from public circulation.

## **VISITING THE SCHOOL**

As a Local Academy Board Member, you may visit the school to fulfil your responsibilities and gain a better understanding of how the school operates on a day-to-day basis. You do not have an automatic right of entry to the school and all visits must be agreed in advance and have a clear focus. A visit may be undertaken to:

- Improve your knowledge of the school and the people that work in it.
- Support the monitoring responsibilities of the LAB.
- Assist the LAB in discussions and making informed decisions.

## **MEETING SCHEDULING AND AGENDA**

Each LAB meeting agenda should consider the latest student data dashboard, Headteacher's report, the RAG rated Academy Improvement Plan and Risk Analysis. It is strongly suggested that each meeting of the LAB starts with a presentation from a senior member of staff from the academy on a current issue of interest to the governors. This should be followed by questions, discussions, and scrutiny from the board.

LABs (Local Academy Boards) should also discuss the following agenda items: HR/Staffing Issues, Capital Projects (if relevant), GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), Expenditure and ensuring delivery of Academy annual budgets and any other items relevant to the individual academy & SEND/Safeguarding issues.

## **AUTUMN 1**

- Review of examination results from the previous summer.
- Update on any premises developments.
- Governance – Elect Chair & Vice Chair, sign Code of Conduct forms & Declaration of interest forms.
- KCSIE, annual Safeguarding refresher and GDPR training and approval of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## AUTUMN 2

- Impact of staffing salary increments, including the Senior Leadership Team.
- Curriculum model for the following academic year.
- Any performance management issues.

## SPRING

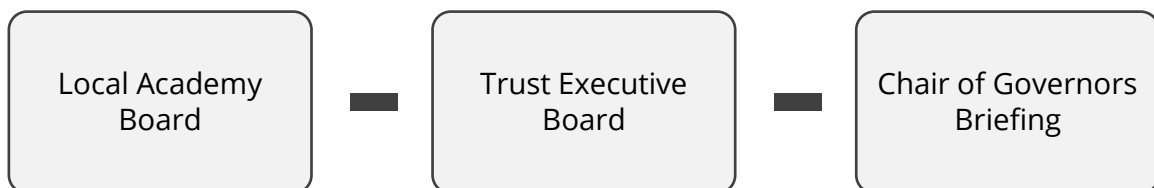
- Findings of latest review of teaching and learning.
- Staffing for the following academic year.
- Accounts Audit issues

## SUMMER

- Proposed site improvements.
- Priorities for next year's Academy Improvement Plan.
- Year-End Forecast Determination (June/July meeting only)

## SEQUENCE OF LAB MEETINGS WITH TRUST MEETINGS

Each termly sequence will be as follows:



Further advice and guidance can be found on the LAB section of the Trust Governance SharePoint or by contacting the Governance Professional on [l.hayes1@redhillacademytrust.org.uk](mailto:l.hayes1@redhillacademytrust.org.uk) or [k.briggs@redhillacademytrust.org.uk](mailto:k.briggs@redhillacademytrust.org.uk).

