



Trustee/Governor Handbook

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1. Welcome

Welcome to your Trustee/Governor handbook. This handbook forms part of your induction pack and outlines the roles and responsibilities of being a Trustee/Governor and how trustees and governing bodies carry out their duties within the Beeches Learning and Development Trust.

2. The Beeches Learning and Development Trust

The Beeches Learning and Development Trust's vision is to build an ethos of:

For Students:

Focus on nurturing the individual

Developing a Growth Mindset and resilience in students is at the heart of all we do

Embracing Challenge – every lesson, every day

Learning in context

Developing students' broader skills to thrive in both current and future learning environments

Raising aspirations to make dreams a reality

Developing the skills of Responsible Learning

For Staff:

Developing the current and the next generation of teachers through exceptional CPD

Developmental Performance Management

Bespoke, tailored & targeted CPD to maximise teacher development & impact

To provide opportunities for cross phase development and experience

Nationally recognised development programmes through IIP Gold and IIP Champion status

For the community:

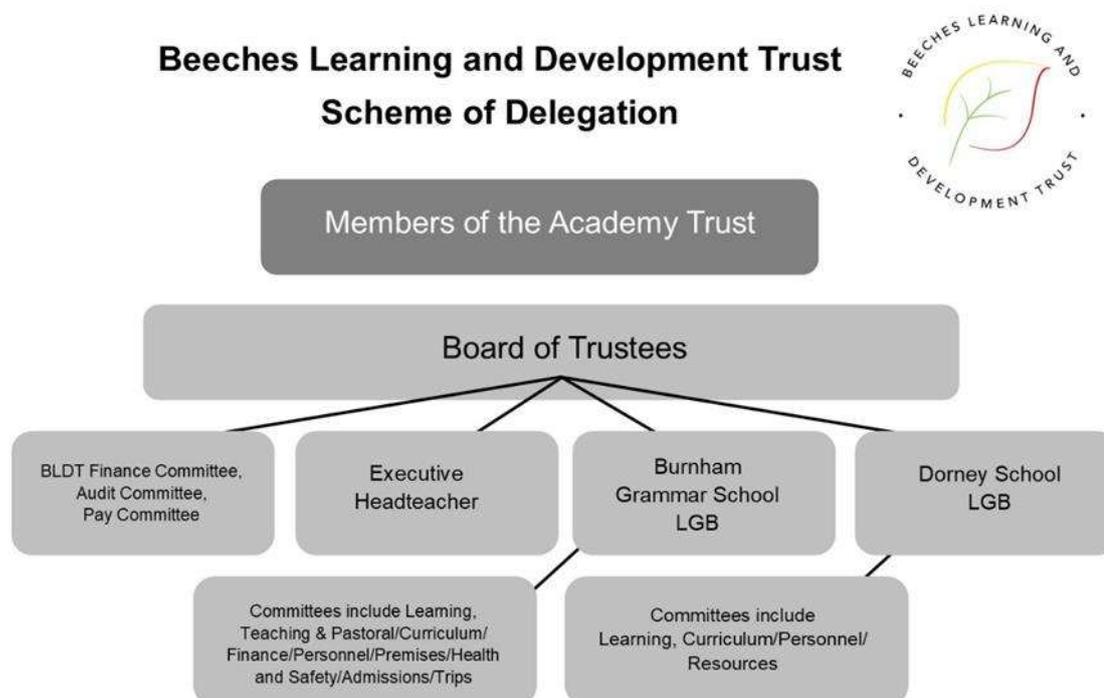
Preserving the ethos and 'flavour' of member schools where sensible & possible

Building links between students, teachers, schools and the communities they serve

Exceptional and challenging outreach programmes to put learning into context with priority given to MAT schools

The Beeches Learning and Development Trust (BLDT) is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The MAT is a single legal entity and is the employer and holder of land titles and the trust board is accountable for all academies in the group. BLDT is governed by the Board of Trustees who are accountable to the BLDT Members.

The structure is outlined in the Scheme of Delegation diagram below:



By forming the MAT, we are ensuring that we will retain control of our own destiny and preserve the unique ethos and aims of the schools, the core principles of which will extend over all of the schools within the BLDT.

Through our various outreach programmes Burnham Grammar School is already supporting primary schools in a number of ways and through the School Direct programme we are training the next generation of both primary and secondary teachers in the local area. Formation of the BLDT formalises much of what we are already doing and provides opportunities to extend this work where we feel it is beneficial and appropriate to do so.

Working across key stages 1 to 5 will also offer fantastic opportunities for Beeches Learning and Development Trust staff to broaden their experience and will also provide first hand and direct experience of the standard of work that KS2 students are completing prior to and KS3 students are completing after their transition to secondary school. This will also help us in retaining our best staff for longer by being able to offer them additional opportunities to develop their practice and experience.

The quality of training and support that the BLDT provides to member schools is indicated by the Investors in People Gold Award and Champion Status that are held by Burnham Grammar School. In addition, the Wellbeing Award has ensured that we develop and look after staff and students, with our status of holders on the Inclusion Award and National Champion status will also ensure that our disadvantaged and vulnerable students are supported to fulfil their potential by embracing all of the opportunities the BLDT has to offer.

3. Burnham Grammar School Aims, Vision, Ethos & Values

[BGS Schools Aims, Vision, Ethos & Values](#)

4. Dorney School Aims, Vision and Ethos

[Dorney School Vision, Value & Aims](#)

5. DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide

The [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#) is guidance from the Department for Education. It sets out the government's vision and priorities for effective governance by:

- outlining the core role and functions of the governing board;
- summarising and providing a first point of reference on all the legal duties on boards
- signposting to more detailed information, guidance and resources; and
- providing information on the support available to boards to be effective.

It should be read alongside the department's '[Competency Framework for Governance](#)' and the '[Clerking Competency Framework](#)', which describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for effective governance and professional clerking. This guidance is also aligned to the [Academy Trust Handbook \(ATH\)](#), which academy trusts must comply with as a condition of their funding agreement.

6. Governance Structure and Lines of Accountability

The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for the day to day running of the MAT to the Executive Headteacher. The Board of Trustees will hold the Executive Headteacher to account for the performance of the MAT. The Executive Headteacher in turn holds other members of the senior leadership team to account by line managing them directly or indirectly. Whilst the Board of Trustees cannot ever delegate its accountability, it can delegate some of the detailed scrutiny, oversight and decision making.

The Executive Headteacher will report to the Board of Trustees on the performance of the MAT, although this will be supplemented by the monitoring by the BLDT Committees, Local Governing Bodies and their committees and individual Governors with any delegated responsibilities.

The Executive Headteacher is performance managed by the Board of Trustees.

6.1 Roles

6.1.1 The Role of the Members

Members are responsible for approving any amendments made to the Academy's Articles of Association, approving the appointment of Trustees, removing Trustees, if they consider it necessary and receiving the audited annual financial statements. The Articles of Association define the governance structure and how the MAT will operate including the setting up of Committees (LGB's). Among other matters, they describe how Members are appointed and replaced, how Trustees are appointed and the numbers and categories of each type of Trustee.

6.1.2 The Role of the Trustees

[Trustee Role Description](#)

The MAT is a charitable company, registered at Companies House, and so Trustees are both charity trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and company directors. Because Trustees are bound by both charity and company law, the terms 'trustees', 'directors' and 'governors' are often used interchangeably. Within the BLDT the term Trustees will be used when referring to the Trustees of the BLDT and the term Governors will be used when referring to members of the LGBs of the schools within the BLDT

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the MAT, and in accordance with the provisions set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and its Funding Agreement. It is legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of the Schools, and must approve a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements (the Financial Procedures manual). In addition, it must carry out the three core governance functions:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Hold the Executive Headteacher and MAT school Headteachers and senior leadership team(s) to account for the educational performance of the Schools and their pupils including safeguarding and the performance management of staff
3. Oversee the financial performance of the Schools and make sure the funds of the Trust are well spent on appropriate priorities and always seeking value for money

The Board of Trustees also establishes and monitors the Trust member schools academy committees (Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)), on which the Governors participate. These provide links to parents and the community, as well as providing additional scrutiny of how the trust is managing its schools and if they are fulfilling both the aims and ethos of the school and those of the BLDT.

The Board of Trustees has the right to review and adapt its governance structure and that of individual schools at any time, subject to the Articles of Association and the Funding Agreement, which includes removing delegation.

6.1.3 The Role of the Trust Board Committees

Trustees delegate some governance functions to board committees, which include the BLDT Finance Committee, BLDT Audit Committee and BLDT Pay Committee. The BLDT Audit Committee advises on the adequacy of the trust's controls and risks and consequently those of its member schools.

Trustee Board committees have at least three trustees in membership, and trustees are in the majority for voting purposes; it is usual for the trust board to appoint board committee chairs and committee members according to their skills.

6.1.4 The Role of the Local Governing Bodies

[BGS Governor Role Description](#)

- Trustees delegate some governance functions to academy committees (LGBs)
- The Trust Board ratifies, and on occasion where a new school joins the MAT approves, the the appointment of the academy committee (LGB) chairs, and the appointment of the majority of LGB members.
- Parents are elected by the parent body to sit on the LGB's
- Staff governors are elected by the staff of member schools
- LGB's are a valued point of consultation and representation in the development of trust policies
- LGB's are the recipients of detailed information about how their schools are being managed
- LGB's are tasked with scrutinising management information thus providing assurance to Trustees that the school is:
 - operating within the ethos and values of the trust and creating a positive climate for all stakeholders
 - working within and to agreed policies
 - meeting the agreed targets
 - engaging with stakeholders
 - acting as an ambassador for the trust
- Burnham Grammar School has 6 standing Committees to include the Personnel Committee, Curriculum Committee, Learning, Teaching and Pastoral Committee, Premises Health and Safety Committee, Trips and the Admissions Committee
- Dorney School has 3 standing Committees to include Curriculum Committee, Resources Committee and Personnel Committee.

6.1.5 The Role of the Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher has the delegated responsibility for the day to day leadership and operation of the MAT.

The Executive Headteacher is the Accounting Officer so has overall responsibility for the operation of the MAT's financial responsibilities and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability; avoiding waste and securing value for money.

The Executive Headteacher is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the performance of the School's within the MAT

The Executive Headteacher is also the Headteacher of Burnham Grammar.

6.1.6 The Role of the LGB Headteacher

The LGB Headteacher leads the SLT on a day-to-day basis and reports to the Executive Headteacher. The Chair of the relevant LGBs will contribute to the Trustees evaluation of the work of the Executive Headteacher, in their role as Head of Burnham Grammar School and the LGB Headteacher of individual schools within the MAT.

6.1.7 Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference cover procedural requirements and practical details of an individual LGB Committee meetings, local governing body (LGB) Meetings, Trustee Committees and Trustee Meetings. This includes outlining what constitutes a quorum, its monitoring responsibilities and what policies it will approve. Terms of reference can be viewed upon appointment.

6.2 Responsibilities

The Nolan Principles

The Nolan principles are seven rules that describe how people in public office should behave and the ethical standards they should uphold. They apply to all school governors because they apply to anyone elected or appointed to public office. They are named after Lord Nolan who chaired a committee in 1995 which examined standards in public office.

Schools will ask new governors to sign a form annually to say they will follow these seven principles, usually by incorporating them into the [code of conduct](#).

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

7. Link Governors and Trustees

Link governors and trustees are appointed to take the lead on an area of their governing board's responsibilities or to help monitor a specific improvement priority. This can be an opportunity to utilise an individual's experience and skill set.

Link roles do not remove the board's collective responsibility. As such, the governing board should ensure that the area assigned is covered on the agenda of full governing board and committee meetings as appropriate, so that all members of the governing board remain informed of the key issues, strategy outcomes and areas for development.

Appointing Link Governors and Trustees

All governing boards are required to appoint governors or trustees to take responsibility for:

- [safeguarding](#)
- [special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\)](#) - some boards choose to appoint a committee to oversee SEND instead

The Department for Education (DfE) also encourages secondary school governing boards to appoint an individual to take a strategic interest in [careers education and guidance](#).

Outside of mandatory roles, NGA advises governing boards to restrict link governor/trustee roles to:

- those linked to current priorities in the board's strategy and/or school improvement plan, for example, to monitor the impact of pupil premium spending
- those that are required for an effective monitoring programme

8. Governance eligibility

To be eligible to volunteer you need:

- the time to contribute (altogether, you can expect to spend 10-20 days each year on governance duties, with some meetings and visits taking place during the working day)
- to be aged 18 or over
- not to be disqualified under the relevant rules and procedures

9. Helpful links

[Governance Glossary](#)

[Governor and Trustee Expenses](#)

[Training and Development](#)

Further training, webinars and podcasts are available via the following providers, login details will be provided upon appointment:

- **GovernorHub**
- **BEP**
- **Modern Governor**
- **NGA Learning Link**

Free Modern Governor [App](#) available: **A GLOSSARY OF EDUCATIONAL TERMS AND FREE ACCESS TO TRIAL MODULES**