Local School Committee
(Local Governing Body)
Terms of Reference

Title	Local School Committee (Local Governing Body) Terms of Reference
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1. Introduction

The Local School Committees (LSCs) of the Discovery Educational Trust (DET) Trust Board (TB) are responsible for ensuring high standards of achievement for all pupils in DET Schools by:

- Setting a School's vision, ethos and strategic direction in line with the overall DET vision, ethos and strategic priorities.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the School and its pupils.
- Review (termly) the School's budget and financial performance.
- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of DET's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This document refers to the members of the LSCs as Local Governors.

The Trustees determine the constitution, membership and proceedings of any committee of the TB.

The establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the Trustees are reviewed, at least, once in every 12 months, usually at the first TB meeting of each academic year.

In the event of an equal division of votes, the Chair of the Committee uses their casting vote. In accordance with the DET Articles of Association, the Chair's casting vote is in addition to their standard vote.

This document should be read in conjunction with the DET Local Governor Role Description and the DET Scheme of Delegation.

2. Membership and Quorum

- Maximum 12 Local Governors, which must include:
    - Two Parent Governors chosen by an election conducted by the HT. All parents or individuals exercising parental responsibility of a pupil on roll at the time of the election are eligible to vote. Parent Governors serve for four years. If a Parent Governor ceases to be the parent/carer of a child registered at the School within the period for which they have been elected, they may continue to be a Local Governor for the rest of their term of office.[1] Appointments of all Parent Governors are noted by the TB.
    - A minimum of one and maximum of two Staff Governors (in addition to the HT) chosen by an election conducted by the HT. Any member of staff employed at the School at the time of the election can nominate themselves to be a Staff Governor. They cannot be a Staff Governor when they are no longer employed at the School. Staff Governors serve for four years.[1] Appointments of all Staff Governors are noted by the TB.

- Providing that the HT agrees so to act, the LSC may appoint the HT as a Local Governor.
- Between five and eight Co-opted Local Governors, recruited by the Chair of the LSC, and approved by the LSC[2], who have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the School. Parents/carers and staff can be appointed as Co-opted Local Governors, but the number of staff members on the LSC must not be more than one third of the total membership of the LSC (when counted with the Staff Governors and the HT). The appointment of all Co-opted Local Governors is approved by the TB and Co-opted Local Governors cannot assume their LSC responsibilities until TB approval is given. All Co-opted Local Governors serve for four years.[1]
- Co-opted Local Governors, who wish to continue in role at the end of their tenure, may be reappointed for a new term of four years, with the approval of the LSC.

1 *Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Local Governor, any Local Governor may be re-appointed or re-elected.*

2 *For a new LSC, the Co-opted Local Governors are selected by the TB for the initial term of four years. Selection continues as above for subsequent appointments.*

- Employees of DET should not be members of the LSC, except for Staff Governors and HTs.
- The Chair of the TB should not be the Chair of the LSC.
- Quorum: Three Local Governors.
- Membership should include, at least, one Local Governor with recent financial experience.

In attendance, as appropriate:

- The DET Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- The DET Deputy CEO;
- The EHT and/or other DET HTs;
- Chair of the TB;
- Governance Professional/Clerk.

Attendees do not contribute to the quorum and do not have a vote.

3. Chair and Vice Chair

The Local Governors elect a Chair and a Vice Chair from among their number **each academic year.**[3] A Local Governor, who is employed by DET/its Schools is not eligible for election as Chair or Vice Chair.

The election of a Chair requires ratification by the TB. The election of the Vice Chair does not require such ratification.

A Chair or Vice Chair holds office until a successor has been elected.

The Chair or Vice Chair may, at any time, resign office by giving notice in writing to the Governance Professional. The Chair or Vice Chair ceases to hold office if:

- They cease to be a Local Governor;
- They are employed by DET/its Schools;
- They are removed from office for whatever reason;
- In the case of the Vice Chair, they are elected to fill a vacancy in the office of the Chair.

3 For a new LSC, the Chair is appointed by the TB for the first academic year or part thereof.

4. General

The LSCs contribute to DET's strategic priorities and improvement plans and ensure that each School has the resources needed to deliver its chosen curriculum.

Specifically, LSCs are charged with responsibilities related to the "Four Ss" – Safeguarding, Standards, Stakeholder Engagement and SEND:

- **Safeguarding**:

To receive and review:

  - Safeguarding/Child Protection Report, including detail on number of referrals and anonymous outcomes (termly);
  - Looked After Children (LAC) Report (termly);
  - English as an Additional Language (EAL) Report (termly);
  - Behaviour Report (including Suspensions/Permanent Exclusions and all bullying, racist etc. incidents) (termly);
  - Local Governor monitoring report on safeguarding and spot check of the Single Central Record (termly);
  - External safeguarding audit report (when available).

- **Standards**:

To receive and approve:

  - the School Improvement Plan (SIP) (annually) and to review the SIP progress update (termly);

To monitor data regarding:

  - Attendance (termly);
  - Pupil Progress and Attainment, including examination results for all Key Stages (summary data to be reported whenever it is available); Premia (Pupil, Sports, Catch-up) (termly if PP is a SIP priority, otherwise annually);
  - Inclusion (termly);
  - Admissions (including pupil numbers, In-Year and Outside Normal Age Range admission decisions) (termly).

To review:

  - Curriculum (an annual review (in the Autumn term) of the curriculum offer to ensure that it meets statutory requirements, reflects the School's values and

meets the needs of all pupils regardless of ability, age, sex or ethnicity. This should include Remote Learning, Sixth Form and the Careers provision, where relevant);
    - Anonymised Pay and Performance data for Teachers and Associate/Support Staff (annually);
    - Inclusion (termly);
    - Health & Safety (termly);
    - HR Reporting (following submission to Human Resources Committee (HRC) (annually);
    - Personal Development and Wellbeing (including Educational Visits) (termly);
    - Monitoring reports following visits to Schools by Local Link Governors (termly).

- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):**

To receive and review:

    - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) pupil attainment data (termly if SEND is a SIP priority, otherwise annually);
    - Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) regular reporting (termly).

- **Stakeholder Engagement**:
    - Pupils, Parents/Carers, Staff, Local Community – to include one Parent Survey, and engagement with pupil groups on specific issues, e.g. Safety, Year 7 entry experience.

      Note that Staff Surveys are managed by the Trust instead of the LSC, but all results are shared with the LSC and, ultimately, with the TB.

Safeguarding and equalities implications are considered when undertaking all LSC functions.

5. Purpose

The TB has delegated the following responsibilities to the LSCs:

- Ensuring knowledge of how DET and the School are led and managed by:
    - Understanding DET's vision, strategic priorities and ambitions and how these are to be realised at School level.
    - Knowing DET's values and being familiar with key policies, understanding how these work in practice and how they create a positive learning, safe and healthy culture for all.
- Being the link with parents/carers and the local community by:
    - Understanding parent/carer views and the community context.
    - Ensuring that the TB and the CEO and/or Deputy CEO if the CEO is unavailable, are fully aware of parent/carer and local community views.
- Monitoring the work of the School, escalating all concerns to the TB and the CEO and/or Deputy CEO if the CEO is unavailable by:
    - Scrutinising data on pupil progress and attainment.
    - Scrutinising applications for in-year admissions and applications for admissions outside of normal age range.

    - Scrutinising data on the School's strategic priorities to ensure that these are in line with expected progress.
    - Scrutinising policies to ensure that the School is compliant with relevant legislation.
    - Visiting the School during the school day, meeting pupils and attending events.
- Participating in various panels, i.e. where there is a grievance, a complaint or where the HT has decided on a Permanent Exclusion.

6. Authority

The LSCs receive their authority from the TB. Significant decisions made by the LSCs must be ratified by the TB at the TB meeting immediately following the LSC meeting at which the decision is taken.

The LSCs have the authority to conduct or authorise investigations into any matters within their scope of responsibility. They are empowered to:

- investigate any activity within these Terms of Reference.
- seek any information that they require from any employee. All employees are directed to cooperate with any requests made by the LSCs. Timescale is as specified by the LSCs.
- ensure allegations of fraud and irregularity are properly pursued.

7. Specific Local School Committee Responsibilities as per the Discovery Educational Trust Scheme of Delegation

Care should be taken to ensure that LSC meeting agendas reflect the following responsibilities:

- Parent Governors - arrange election process with HT.
- LSC Chair – appoint and remove with approval by TB. Refer Note 3 above.
- LSC Vice Chair – appoint and remove.
- LSC Governors – recruit and remove. Note that all appointments require approval of TB. Refer Note 2 above.
- LSC Governors – re-appoint.
- Skills Audit - complete and use to identify gaps to be recruited for.
- Self-Review of LSC Performance.
- Review Chair's Performance - complete 360 Review.
- Succession Planning for LSC.
- Schedule of Business for TB – provide input to TB based on individual School requirements/challenges etc.
- Schedule of Business for LSC – agree.
- Declarations of business, pecuniary and personal interests – complete declarations in a timely manner upon request.
- Report Work of LSC - submit to TB.
- Policies:

    - Accessibility Plan (approve and monitor);
    - Anti-Bullying Policy (approve and monitor);
    - Attendance Policy (approve and monitor), Behaviour Policy (approve and monitor);
    - Careers Guidance Programme and Provider Access Policy Statement (Secondary only) (review and approve);
    - Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plan (approve and monitor);
    - Cyber Response Plan (approve and monitor);
    - EYFS Policy (approve and monitor in order to be assured that provision is fit for purpose);
    - Home School Agreement (SMS only) (approve and monitor);
    - Minibus Policy (Secondary only) (approve and monitor);
    - Relationships and Sex Education Policy (monitor following TB approval).
- Educational Visits – in accordance with the DET Educational Visits Policy, and following HT approval, scrutinise and approve the Risk Assessment(s) for all UK Residential (including overnight) and Overseas Trips.
- Management of Risk – review School Risk Register and manage operational risks.
- Engagement with School Stakeholders – to include pupils, parents/carers, local community (with HT approval of all communication).
- School Vision and Strategy – agreeing Key Priorities and KPIs against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured – determine jointly with EHT/HT and with advice from the CEO and Deputy CEO.
- School HT - provide advice to CEO and TB on appointment and dismissal.
- Adhere to DET Financial Regulations.
- Support, recognising budgetary constraints, the delivery of the School key priorities, agree HT plans and advise TB.
- Monitor and agree, recognising budgetary constraints, the HT staffing structure plans. Ensure that these are reflected in current and future budget plans and reported to TB.
- Auditing and Reporting Arrangements for matters of Compliance, e.g. Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Employment - agree jointly with TB.
- Reporting Arrangements for Progress on Key Priorities - agree jointly with TB.
- Performance Management of the HT – complete via the HT Performance Management Sub-Committee (of which the CEO is a member).
- HT Pay Award – recommendation from the HT Performance Management Sub-Committee to the Human Resources Committee.
- Teaching and Support Staff Pay Progression – receive anonymised data for information only.
- LSC Local Governor Monitoring - agree and action ensuring adherence to the DET Trustee and Local Governor School Visits Protocol.
- Value for Money – monitor compliance - understand the value for money concept and ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Recognise the links with the local community and how these can be nurtured through lettings of premises and extended School activities.

- Lettings – recommend a scale of charges annually (final meeting of the year) for the next academic year for review and approval by the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) at its final meeting each year.

In support of the above responsibilities, the LSC receives:

- A summary of the annual budget at the start of each academic year.
- Summary reports throughout the year, detailing funding updates and budget variances, with particular reference to specific grants and trading accounts.
- A summary of the year-end position post audit.

8. Frequency of Meetings and Proceedings

The LSCs meet, a minimum, of twice each term – four meetings each year are formal minuted meetings with the other two meetings taking the form of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop-style meetings. All LSCs also meet at such other times as the Chairs of the LSCs deem appropriate.

Unless otherwise agreed by all Local Governors, notice of meetings, confirmation of the venue, time and date together with an agenda and all relevant papers, should normally be circulated to each Local Governor, at least, seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair (if appropriate), the Local Governors choose an Acting Chair for that meeting from among their number. In the absence of the Governance Professional/Clerk, the Local Governors choose a Clerk for that meeting from among their number. The HT should not assume this responsibility.

9. Reporting

The Governance Professional/Clerk minutes the proceedings and resolutions of the LSCs. Minutes of LSC meetings are promptly circulated, following clearance by the Chair of the LSC (or alternate), to all Local Governors for approval. Minutes are presented and acknowledged at the next LSC meeting by the Chair of the LSC or another Committee member.

10.Wellbeing

The LSCs must ensure that, in all discussions, and for all decisions taken, the mental and physical wellbeing of all DET staff and pupils is a key factor for consideration, and that no decisions are approved where there is any doubt as to the impact on this wellbeing.