

An introduction for local governors

Governance in a multi academy trust

In a multi-academy trust (MAT), the board of trustees may delegate some of its governance functions to local governing bodies or local advisory committees.

The local advisory committees function as academy-specific committees and individuals who sit on these committees are known as local governors. They are not trustees, unless they also sit on the board of trustees, and do not have the statutory powers or legal responsibilities of a trustee or director.

Each school or academy in Dudley Academies Trust has a local advisory committee which plays a strategic role in making decisions and taking action to improve the standards of teaching and learning for all pupils at the academy in a safe and stimulating environment.

Who are Local Governors?

The local governors are made up of people drawn from different parts of the local community which ensures that a sufficient diversity of views and experience is represented:

- Parent governors are selected by election and are drawn from parents and carers of pupils at the academy.
- Staff governors – selected by election from teaching and support staff paid to work at the academy.
- Community Governors – appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Each local advisory committee is chaired by a trustee from the Trust Board, which provides a conduit for information sharing between the local governors and the Trust Board.

What do the Local Governors do?

Local governors have a range of duties and powers which are delegated by the Trust Board in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association. They have a general responsibility for the conduct of the academy with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. This includes setting targets for pupils achievement, monitoring the academy's educational and financial performance, making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based, the learning environment is safe, reviewing staff performance and pay and many other duties.

The local advisory committee meets five times per year and reports to the Board of Trustees through the production of minutes of each meeting.

What is the role of the local advisory committee?

The remit for the local advisory committee is set out in the scheme of delegation and the terms of reference for local advisory committees.

Each year, a programme of business to be considered at each meeting is agreed by the Trust Board which ensures a consistent approach across all Academies within the Trust and ensures that the academy is meeting all of its statutory obligations as well as considering matters set out within its terms of reference in a timely manner.

What is the time commitment for a Local Governor?

Local governors are highly committed individuals who give their time on a voluntary basis and although they are not paid for their services, they may claim expenses to cover costs of attending meetings.

Meetings of the local advisory committee generally take place five times per year and are held during the early evenings at the academy. Local governors also need to be able to devote time to preparing for meetings by reading papers provided in advance of meetings.

Some local governors also take on 'lead governor' roles where they may lead on a particular aspect of the committee's work, for example in reviewing the effectiveness of safeguarding, pupil premium or provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. These additional responsibilities require time for local governors to visit the academy and meet with staff and pupils.

In addition, local governors are encouraged to play an active role in the life of the school by attending academy events such as open evenings, parent consultation events and awards evenings.

What training and development is available?

Local governors are required to undertake certain training modules of on-line training which are a statutory requirement, for example Safeguarding and Prevent training. In addition, the Trust offers a programme of training sessions throughout the year which local governors are encouraged to attend in order to develop their skills and competences as well as further develop their knowledge of the operation of the Trust.

Where can I find further information?

For further information please visit the Dudley Academies Trust website at www.dudleyacademiestrust.org or contact:

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