

3. MEETINGS

- 3.1. The Committee will meet at least once per term (3 times per academic year), normally in advance of the Trust Board Meetings.
- 3.2. The quorum shall be 2 Trustees.
- 3.3. The administration of meetings will be managed by the Clerk to the Trustees. Agenda and papers will be circulated, whenever possible, to members of the Committee 7 days in advance of the meeting.
- 3.4. In addition to voting in person at a meeting, Trustees can vote on matters via e-mail to the Clerk to the Trustees (ahead of the meeting) or via video / telephone conferencing during the meeting.

4. AUTHORITY

- 4.1. The Committee will report to the Board on any decision taken in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.
- 4.2. The Committee is authorised to investigate any activity within its term of reference or specifically delegated to it by the Board.
- 4.3. The Committee is authorised to obtain any legal and professional advice it considers necessary, normally in consultation with the Chair of the Trust Board.

5. CORE DUTIES

The main duties of the Audit & Compliance Committee are as follows:

- 5.1. Fulfil its responsibilities as set out in these Terms of Reference in line with the Trust's Funding Agreement, Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation, Academies Financial Handbook, Academies Accounts Direction and the Trust's Financial Procedures Manual.
- 5.2. Ensure sound management of the Trust's finances and resources including proper planning, monitoring, probity and value for money.
- 5.3. Advise the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's governance, risk management, internal control and value for money systems and frameworks.

- 7.3. Review all reports received from the external auditor (e.g. annual reports, management letter) and consider any issues raised and the associated management response and action

- 8.6. Review the Employee Relations Strategy and provide recommendations to the Board for approval of any required amendments to the Trade Union Recognition Agreement and Collective Agreement.
- 8.7. Review HR policies and recommend approval to the Board where necessary and appropriate.
- 8.8. Review and make recommendations to the Board for approval of well-being related programmes and policies for staff.
- 8.9. Review the diversity and inclusion plan and goals of the Trust, including equality impact assessments on updated policies.
- 8.10. Review, annually, the Gender Pay Gap and Facilities Time statements and recommend approval to the Board.
- 8.11. Monitor the Trust's preparation for upcoming changes in employment law.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES – GOVERNANCE

- 9.1. For the Trust Board, the Audit & Compliance Committee will:
 - 9.1.1. Ensure the Trust Board undertakes annual self-evaluation, reviewing its composition in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact.
 - 9.1.2. Ensure that Trustees undertake annual skills audits.
 - 9.1.3. Ensure a governance action plan is maintained using information gathered from internal/external audits, skills audits and self-evaluations.
 - 9.1.4. Ensure that the governance action plan informs and supports recruitment, induction and training.
- 9.2. For LGCs, the Audit & Compliance Committee will:
 - 9.2.1. Ensure each LGC undertakes annual self-evaluation, reviewing its composition in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact.
 - 9.2.2. Ensure all LGC Governors undertake an annual skills audit.
 - 9.2.3. Ensure the LGC maintains a governance action plan using information gathered from skills audits and self-evaluations.
 - 9.2.4. Ensure that the governance action plan informs and supports recruitment, induction and training.

10. DETAILED RESPONSIBILITIES – OTHER

10.1. The Audit & Compliance Committee shall consider and advise the Trust Board on the following specific matters:

10.1.1. Review of other significant financial or related reports or submissions that impact on the Trust, its Academies and its subsidiaries. These are likely to involve the Department for Education, Education & Skills Funding Agency, other local authorities, Companies House, HMRC or similar regulatory bodies.

10.1.2. Recommend to the Board any changes to Trust structure including the acquisition of new Academies and setting up of new trading subsidiaries. Any recommendation will include a review of risk and due diligence processes.

10.1.3. Oversight of Health and Safety policy, including:

10.1.3.1. Critical Incident and Business Continuity planning;

10.1.3.2. Accident and RIDDOR reporting;

10.1.3.3. Statutory training;

10.1.3.4. Statutory compliance testing;

10.1.3.5. Fire risk assessments;

10.1.3.6. Asbestos risk assessments;

10.1.3.7. Premises and building conditions.

10.1.4. Review Website and Statutory policy compliance in line with the Trust funding agreement/s. The Committee will have an overview of the information that the Department for Education (DfE) recommends to be published on schools' websites.

10.1.5. Undertake GDPR review of arrangements for all schools' personal data. This will include schools' assurance that the appropriate governance and control measures are in place.