



## **Cumbria Education Trust Board Protocols (2018-19)**

Cumbria Education Trust is a charitable company and is a company limited by guarantee.

The most common term for a Board is Trustees, however in relation to Cumbria Education Trust they are referred to as Trust Board Directors. The Trust Board Directors are responsible for directing all activities of the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The Trust Board follow an agreed scheme of delegation (SoD) and terms of reference (ToR).

In most MATs there is an additional layer of governance – locally known to Cumbria Education Trust as the Local Advisory Boards (LABs). Effectively a LAB is a committee of the Trust Board. The LABs are set up to provide governance in relation to their respective school/academy on behalf of the Trust Board and in accordance with the policies determined by the Trust Board. The LABs are established under SoD. The SoD confirm the role assigned to it and the delegation of any powers from the Trust Board.

The main aim of the Trust Board is to raise the educational achievement of all students/pupils within its community. All Trust Board Directors will contribute most effectively to the Trust's aim by focusing on four key areas:

- To provide a clear strategic direction for the Trust
- To act as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the Trust's school/academies
- To hold the school/academies to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides.
- To agree, support, demonstrate and actively promote the Trust's vision and values – Respect, Responsibility and Resilience and 'Be The Best You Can Be'.

### **Trust Board Directors should: -**

- Carry out activities that are intended to improve the educational provision for the students/pupils within the Trust's family of schools/academies.
- Observe the Trust's scheme of delegation and terms of reference and act within its powers.
- Ensure that its decision making processes are informed, rigorous and timely.
- Always act in the best interests of the Trust, its staff and the communities it serves.
- Act with integrity and avoid any conflicts between personal interests and the interests of the Trust.
- Not benefit personally from the Trust.
- Ensure the Trust is solvent and operationally effective.
- Manage any mitigate risks exposed to the Trust, its assets and reputation.
- Comply with charity law and the requirements of the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- Have regard to any other legal requirements.
- Use reasonable care and skill with regard to their personal skills and experience.

- Take professional advice when needed (as detailed in the ToRs).
- Strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted. Effective working relationships should be developed with the LABs, headteachers, staff, parents and the local communities.
- Express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made.
- All visits to Trust schools/academies should be undertaken within a framework which has been established and agreed collectively by the Trust Board – see Appendix 1.
- Have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust. Any actions within the Trust school communities should reflect this.

### **General**

Any pecuniary interest that a Trust Board Director may have in connection with Trust business must be recorded in the register of interests, which will be published on the Trust and school/academy websites. Where an interest is declared in a meeting, the Trust Board Director must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.

All Trust Board Directors have equal status.

Trust Board Directors are expected to attend all meetings and be punctual.

Where possible, an agenda and relevant documents will be distributed at least five working days before the meeting. Minutes are produced that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, within 10 working days.

## **Appendix 1 – protocols for visiting the School/academy**

Trust Board Directors do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to their school/academy in order to see the school/academy in action and to understand how the school works.

In order to avoid misunderstandings arising, Trust Board Directors are asked to follow this protocol: -

Trust Board Directors are openly welcome at any of their schools/academies; however, any visits must be agreed in advance with the relevant Headteacher. A convenient date and time needs to be agreed prior to any visit.

Trust Board Directors should have a clear focus for their visit i.e. safeguarding Audit, school academy/event etc.

If Trust Board Directors are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen in a school/academy this should be discussed with the CEO.