Woolwich Polytechnic
School for Boys

Woolwich Polytechnic
School for Girls

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
PolyMAT

PolyMAT

Terms Of Reference for The Academy Committees

Sent to Chair and HoS for approval June 23
Reviewed May 2023
Approved: September 2023
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Membership

The Trust Board shall determine and review annually at the first meeting of the school year the terms of reference and membership for the Academy Committee. The Committee shall be constituted of no more than 15 members and no fewer than 7 as the Trust Board sees fit. This number will include: two Parent Members and the Headteacher/Head of School as appropriate. Members of the Trust Board and Executive may be in attendance as required. Members of the school leadership team will attend as required.

Parent Members will be elected by a vote of their peers. All other Members will be appointed by the Trust Board. No more than one third of Academy Committee members will be employees of the Trust.

The term of office will be for 4 years except for the Head of School. The Chair and vice chair will be elected annually. All Members will be required to conform to the Trust's Governance Code of Conduct at all times.

Quorum

At least 3 ACM's or one third of members who are present and entitled to vote (whichever is the greater). If a quorum is not present the meeting shall not be held.

Chairing

The Trust Board at its discretion will appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of the Academy Committee annually at the first meeting of the academic year. However, the Trust Board may delegate this function to the Academy Committee to elect the Chair and Vice Chair If both the Chair and the Vice Chair are absent from the Academy Committee Meeting, those members present shall appoint one of their number to Chair the meeting.

Attendance

Members of the committee, the Head of Schools and the Clerk to the committee have a right to attend committee meetings. Any other member of the Trustee board may also attend and any member of the Trust Executive. The committee may allow other persons to attend as required.

ACMs shall be disqualified from the Local Academy Committee if they are absent without permission for all their meetings held within a period of six months.

Meetings

The Academy Committee shall meet twice per term (six times per year) and shall. hold such other meetings as are necessary.

Every question to be decided shall be determined by a majority of votes. Every ACM will have one vote. Where there is equal division, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.

Notice of meetings

Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date, together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the

Committee, and to any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent to the Governance Professional at least 10 school days prior to the meeting and they will be sent by email to the Committee members and to other attendees, as appropriate, at the same time. Meetings may take place by teleconference / video conference.

Minutes of meetings

Minutes of the proceedings and decisions of meetings of the Committee shall be recorded. The minutes shall include the names of those present and in attendance, any apologies received, any conflicts of interest declared, and the appointment or removal of any Committee members. Any decisions by the Committee will be taken by a simple majority. If any member of the Committee substantially disagrees with the majority on any proceeding or decision, they have the right to have this recorded in the minutes. Draft minutes of Committee meetings shall be circulated within 10 working days of the meeting to the Committee Chair, who will approve within 10 working days, before being circulated promptly to all other members of the Committee. The minutes shall be formally approved at the subsequent Committee meeting and a final signed copy maintained for the organisation's records.

Overview

The Academy Committee is designed to allow Academy Committee Members to focus on the key priorities for each school, including Progress, Learning and Achievement, Safeguarding, SEND, Well-Being, Stakeholder engagement, Leadership and so on. Many policy decisions are now centralised at the Trust Board level and the Academy Committee will only approve policies that are specific to the academy (as listed in the PolyMAT Governance Handbook). Academy Committees have been created in order to:

- Remove much administrative and compliance duties which can detract from a focus on learning and achievement – these would sit with the Trust Board whenever possible.
- Promote more active involvement in creating agendas, scrutinising evidence and judging standards – all of which will allow better support of school leaders and more focused holding to account.
- Promote more active involvement in visiting the school, meeting leaders and other staff, speaking with students and parents – this will help triangulation and monitoring and give ACMs a real insight into the successes and needs of each academy.
- Allow the collation and sharing of best practice between academies via the Deep Dive Forum.
- Promote regular communication with the Trust Board about successes and areas for improvement.

Triangulation

The work of the Academy Committee should be supported by regular visits to the academy to triangulate evidence and provide further support and challenge to academy leaders. ACM's may also be required to undertake Link Roles with responsibility for overseeing a specific aspect of the work of the school.

Terms of Reference

The Local Academy Committee (LAC) and its members will always act in the best interest of PolyMAT and its individual academies.

The LACs will work closely with the Board of Trustees and the Executive Team and shall promptly implement any advice or recommendations made by the Board or the Executive Team in respect of standards and performance or risk, particularly where areas of weakness have been identified.

The Trust Board reserves the right to review or remove any power or responsibility conferred on the LAC under this constitution and terms of reference, including where:

- there is insufficient progress being made against educational targets.
- there has been a breakdown in the way the Academy is managed or governed; or
- the safety of pupils or staff is threatened, including a breakdown of discipline.

PROGRESS

1. To monitor the implementation of the schools' SEF and advise the Trust Board on the school's development priorities.
2. To monitor and evaluate the impact of quality of teaching on rates of student progress and standards of achievement.
3. To receive regular reports from the SLT on the predicted outcomes for all students and agree targets for student achievement, progress and examination results. In particular, Pupil Premium (PP) and vulnerable students.
4. To monitor and evaluate rates of student progress, including Pupil Premium students and any other vulnerable groups including the more able students and underachieving students.
5. To review the impact of the interventions and support for Pupil Premium students, to review and monitor outcomes against the published Pupil Premium strategy and to ensure that the gap in attainment is diminishing.

LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

1. To monitor the effectiveness of the Teaching and Learning policy.
2. To challenge and support new ideas based on research which lead to better teaching practice.
3. To ensure that teaching strategies are shared between PolyMAT schools and that the Teaching and Learning Team is working in collaboration with the PolyMAT Director of School Improvement.
4. To monitor and review the implementation of the SEND Code of Practice and monitor the impact on students with SEND.
5. To review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum offer.
6. To ensure that all children have equal opportunities.
7. To review and monitor that staff embed e-Safety and eLearning into their curriculum to support the development of safer online behaviours amongst students.

SAFEGUARDING

1. To ensure that policies and practices within the academy always promote outstanding safeguarding practice as the overriding priority.
2. To monitor and evaluate safeguarding issues that have occurred.
3. Support effective safeguarding practices at all levels.
4. Receive regular updates on safeguarding practices, including safer recruitment.
5. To ensure that annual safeguarding and safer recruitment training is undertaken by relevant staff and by relevant Academy Committee Members.

PUPIL RELATED MATTERS

1. To review attendance and pupil absences
2. To hear complaints at the relevant stage in line with the Trust's complaints policy
3. To convene a committee to review the fixed term/permanent exclusion of a pupil by the Head of School.
4. To ensure statutory compliance by providing Trustees with the rationale for either upholding or overturning an exclusion decision, in the case of an appeal.

WELL-BEING

1. To monitor staff well-being and to ensure that the academy is taking positive action to make well-being outstanding.
2. To review and scrutinise well-being plans in the academy.
3. To confirm that staff well-being surveys are being undertaken in the academy annually.
4. To monitor staff well-being surveys and ensure that action is taken in specific areas of practice to improve well-being.

LEADERSHIP

1. To consider and review the curriculum (and other curriculum related) policy, and to receive reports from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and other teachers on the development of the curriculum, and to consider matters relating to the curriculum as referred to it by the Trust Board.
2. To approve and monitor individual academy development plans.
3. To manage school level risks on the Trust Risk Register.
4. To set priorities for improvement and monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans which relate to the committee's area of operation.
5. To report to the Trust Board at its termly meetings.
6. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management.
7. To consider recommendations from external reviews of the school (e.g., Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), agree actions as a result of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of the plan.
8. To monitor the schools' publicity, public presentation and relationships with the wider community.
9. To identify and celebrate pupil achievements.
10. To oversee arrangements for educational visits.
11. To ensure all statutory requirements for reporting and publishing information are met and the school website content is fully compliant and presented in an accessible way.
12. To monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance.

COLLABORATION

1. To ensure that all PolyMAT schools are regularly sharing best practice.
2. To ensure that each school has a culture of creativity and establishes new ideas which can later be shared.
3. To ensure that both schools maintain a spirit of partnership and that staff recognise that they are part of the same "family" with an interest in shared success.
4. To work in collaboration with the other Local Academy Committees in the Trust for any functions that require sitting on a panel.

The Chair of the Academy Committee will provide a report to the Trust Board three times per year at the Full Trust Board Meeting.

In line with the Trust's desire to remove statutory and policy procedures from the Academy Committees, the Trust Board retains approval levels for most policies. Where appropriate, the Trust Board will seek advice from the Academy Committee and Trust/School Leaders. The Trust Board will decide the approval level of other or new policies as the need arises.

These Terms of Reference shall come into force on 11 September 2023