



Academy Committee role description

For those governing in PolyMAT Trust schools

Academy Committee Member role description

The Role of Academy Committee Members is to raise standards of learning and achievement and ensure pupil progress across all key stages within the academy. Each academy has its own Academy Committee which replaces the LGB.

Those who sit on an Academy Committee will become Academy Committee Members (ACM). Each Academy Committee will require two Parent ACMs to be voted on from the respective academy populations. All other ACMs will be appointed by the Trust Board.

What are the differences between an Academy Committee and an LGB?

There are a number of differences which are outlined in the Terms of Reference. The key differences include:

- The removal of much administrative and compliancy duties which can detract from a focus on learning and achievement – these would sit with the Trust Board whenever possible.
- 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.
- 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.

Members work together to carry out their core functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

ACM's must also ensure that the committee complies with all legal and statutory requirements. ACM's should seek the advice of the Governance Professional to the committee and other professional advice as appropriate.

Committee strategic responsibilities

The ACM works closely with head of school and senior leaders. Heads of School are responsible for day-to-day management whereas the role of the Academy Committee is strategic. As such, ACM's are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the school

- deciding the principles that guide school policies and approving key policies
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- agreeing the school's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

Monitoring and evaluating school performance

Governors must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the school's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the school is operating effectively in line with these policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external reporting on all aspects of school performance
- asking challenging questions of school leaders in order to hold them to account
- holding the head of school to account for standards, and compliance with agreed policies
- visiting the school to monitor implementation of the strategy and reporting back to the board (this could be in a link governor capacity)
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

Panels and committees

When required, ACM's are expected to serve on panels or committees in order to:

- appoint the head of school and other senior leaders
- appraise the head of school and make pay recommendations
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

Contribution to the governance of the organisation

ACM's should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the committee by:

- active involvement in creating agendas, scrutinising evidence and judging standards
- attending meetings, reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior leaders and colleagues on the committee. 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
- getting to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis
- Responsibility to collate and share best practice between academies via the Deep Dive Forum.
- Regular communication with the Trust Board about successes and areas for improvement

Expenses

Governors should receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as an ACM. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and dependency care, but not loss of earnings.