



The Crypt School

Role Description

Governor/Trustee/Director

INTRODUCTION

The Crypt School as an Academy Trust is a Company Limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The Trustees are the people responsible under the academy trust's articles of association for controlling the school's overall strategic management, development and administration. They have responsibility for directing its affairs, and for ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the trust's charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public.

The Trustees are selected from a wide range of backgrounds and our aim is to achieve a balanced board with a core of individuals with educational, legal, accountancy, finance, property management, business, and marketing backgrounds. All share a genuine commitment to the future of our school.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees work collectively as a group and are accountable to the wider community (the 'stakeholders') for the delivery of the best possible educational, pastoral and support service. The day to day management of the school is delegated to the Headmaster, Bursar and members of the senior management team, and the Trustees monitor performance in the light of an agreed framework.

1 Legal

The Trustees of The Crypt School are also the Governors and the Directors of the Academy Trust and must fully understand their duties as company directors and charity trustees. The duties of company directors are described in sections 170 to 181 of the Companies Act 2006. The role and duties of charity trustees are described by the Charity Commission in their guidance CC3: the essential trustee: what you need to know.

The Board of Trustees of the academy trust has wide responsibilities under statute, regulations and the funding agreement. Principally, it is responsible for ensuring that the trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement and the Academy Handbook. The Board of Trustees has wide discretion over its use of the trust's funds, which it must discharge reasonably and in a way that commands broad public support. It is responsible for the proper use of those funds, including regularity and propriety, and for ensuring value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Board of Trustees must understand their statutory duties as company directors as set out in the Companies Act 2006. These comprise the duties to:

- act within their powers;
- promote the success of the company;
- exercise independent judgement;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- declare an interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

2 Governance

As a Board the Trustees are responsible for the:

- Review of their governance including a consideration of the composition of the board in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact.
- Election of a chairman, deputy chairman, chairmen of committees
- Co-opting individuals with particular expertise or qualifications as additional members of committees
- Appointment (and removal) of a clerk and company secretary
- Annual review of the scheme of delegation
- Changes to the board structure;
- Approval of the terms of reference of the committees;
- Compliance with Ofsted provisions
- Monitoring of the Risk Register to ensure Trustees and Management are taking action where necessary
- Appointment and removal of Trustees is reserved for the Members of the Trust who will also be Trustees. Not all Trustees will be Members.

3 Strategy

To participate in the planning and setting of the School's strategic direction at Board of Trustees or committee meetings to determine:

- the vision and ethos of the school;
- clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school;
- that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- the school's budget;
- the school's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
- the approval of other school policies ensuring these are consistent with the School Strategy and Key Objectives
- the future development of the school site
- the schools admission policy

4 Management Accountability

To hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance this includes:

- agreeing the outcomes from the school's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school improvement plan;
- considering all relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance; ensuring plans are in place and implemented where action to improve is required.
- asking challenging questions of school leaders and ensuring these questions are correctly responded to.
- ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits and understanding what if any remedial action is required ensuring implementation.
- ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies;
- acting as a link governor for a specific department, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the Board of Trustees on the progress on the relevant school priority;
- listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders : pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community.

5 Resources

Ensure the school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well including

- adequate staff to carry out the Schools objectives
- the necessary expertise on business management,
- external advice where necessary,
- effective appraisal
- CPD (Continuing Professional Development)
- suitable premises for pupils, teaching and support staff

6 Finance

Control and monitoring of financial affairs ensuring compliance with the Funding Agreement, Academy Handbook and Company and Charity regulations by

- Appointing an appropriately qualified person as the school's Bursar.
- ensuring that all investment decisions are in the best interests of the trust
- ensuring good financial management and effective internal controls including setting up a process for independent checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks.
- reviewing information on financial performance at least three times a year and ensuring plans are in place and implemented if financial performance is off course.
- approving a balanced budget,
- Approving the annual report and accounts ensuring they are audited by a statutory auditor and incorporate accounting policies approved by the Board of Trustees
- Establishing the Trusts reserve policy
- Ensuring the Academy is sufficiently insured including Trustees' indemnity insurance

7 Employment

When required Trustees may be asked to serve on panels of Trustees to:

- appoint the headmaster, and participate in the appointment of Deputy Headmaster and other senior leaders;
- appraise the headmaster;
- set the headmaster's pay and approve/disapprove the pay recommendations for other staff;
- hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
- Listen to appeals and complaints
- Approve the structure for salaries and allowances
- Set the pay policy and ensure that it is adhered to on all occasions.
- Discuss employment issues that could result in legal proceedings

6 Meetings and in school commitments

Trustees are expected to:

- Attend all/most of the full Trustee Board meetings. At present, there are usually five 'normal' meetings per year with additional "strategy" meetings as agreed. These are normally held at 4pm on a Monday and last around 2 hours.
- Participate in at least one committee of the Trustee Board. These last around of two hours and each has between 3 and 6 meetings per year.
- Trustees will be expected to read all papers in advance of the main and committee meetings. These should be sent out at least 1 week before the meeting.
- Become the 'link' governor for at least one subject area. This involves a minimum of one annual visit to the department concerned and the production of a one-side report for the Board of Trustees.
- Attend at least some of the open school events through the year such as prize giving, concerts, plays, carol service etc. in order to show support and be part of school life.

7 Curriculum Oversight

Trustees have responsibility for

- Setting the admissions policy
- Monitoring performance against academic targets ensuring remedial action is taken when required
- Endorsing the aims and objectives of the school
- Overview of changes to the curriculum
- Approving changes to the structure of the school day;
- Monitoring compliance with Ofsted standards;

8 Pastoral Oversight

Trustees have responsibility for overseeing

- Arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Child Protection policies, procedures and training
- School policies on behaviour, sanctions, exclusions of pupils
- Appeals procedure

- Attendance policies
- Complaints procedures
- Anti-bullying policies
- School uniform policy
- Safety and security of the premises
- Provision of First Aid
- Any issues affecting a pupil that could result in legal proceedings
- Standard of classroom accommodation
- SEN
- Liaison with the social services/police were required

Reports on the above topics are produced by the Head Master and other senior staff on a regular cycle for the meetings of Trustees and of the Sub- Committees. They form the framework of the discussion.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Trustees should act at all times in accordance with the Nolan principles (see Appendix 1)- Each Governor has an important role in supporting and encouraging the Head Master, although prime responsibility for developing the partnership rests with the Chairman of Trustees. As the employers of all of the staff, it is important for the Trustees to meet staff wherever possible, and groups of pupils, when the opportunities are offered. Regular attendance at meetings and major functions is important, and Trustees need to be prepared to devote the time and energy that is necessary to carry out their role and to develop their understanding of the school. They should arrange their visits in advance via the Headmaster.

Individual Trustees should express their personal views within meetings; but once a decision has been reached, they are bound by collective decision-making. They need to take care to avoid breaches of confidentiality and to avoid undermining the Headmaster, since their relationship can only flourish if it is based upon mutual respect and collaboration. They should only speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees if they have been specifically authorised to do so - a function that normally falls to the Chairman, or Deputy Chairman. Conflicts of interest must be declared in advance.

Qualities of integrity, impartiality and objectivity are important. The Board of Trustees, under the leadership of the Chairman should be as transparent and open as possible, with all members conscious of their responsibilities towards the school community and of the clear distinction between the roles of trustees and of paid employees as well as any potential conflicts of interest.

Trustees must be aware that in the School or outside they should not undertake any action that brings the School into disrepute. On all occasions Trustees must present the school in the best possible light. Trustees are responsible in every way for ensuring that the school performance is of the highest possible standard.

TRAINING

Trustees are encouraged to attend training courses and seminars in order to reinforce their awareness of their varied duties and responsibilities. The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees will circulate lists of courses on a regular basis and ensure Trustees attend appropriate training when it is necessary for their individual role e.g. safeguarding.

Appendix 1 The Nolan Principles

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

