Board terms of reference

For academy trust boards

Reviewed September 2026

Name of trust:	HOLMES CHAPEL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
Date agreed:	
Review date:	Terms of reference must be reviewed by the full trust board annually.

Board Chair:	TRACEY GOODWIN
Clerk:	Pauline Challinor
Membership:	13
Quorum:	A minimum of three trustees must be in attendance for all meetings
Meetings:	Meeting frequency to be determined by the trust board – currently choose to meet once per month. Audit and Risk committee meet 3 times per year.

Board Members

Key functions and Powers

- To appoint (or remove) Trustees.
- To appoint (or remove) the Trust's external auditors.
- To control any changes to the Trust's constitution (its Memorandum and Articles of Association).
- To receive the Trust's audited accounts.
- Members can, by special resolution, direct Academy Trustees to take a specific action where Trustees are unable, or unwilling to act in the best interests of the Trust. Members should consider using this power if they believe the trust board is failing to carry out its core functions, or is acting unlawfully.
- To have sight of minutes of Trust Board meetings, in order to be informed about Trust business and provide assurance the Board is exercising effective governance.

Board of Trustees

The Audit and Risk committee will monitor, evaluate and report on:

- recommend to members the appointment of an external auditor (in accordance with the trust's articles of association)
- Assess the effectiveness and resources of the external auditor to provide a basis for decisions by the trust's members about the auditor's reappointment or dismissal or retendering - considerations may include:
    - The auditor's sector expertise
    - Their understanding of the trust and its activities
    - Whether the audit process allows issues to be raised on a timely basis at the appropriate level
    - The quality of auditor comments and recommendations in relation to key areas
    - The personal authority, knowledge and integrity of the audit partners and their staff to interact effectively with, and robustly challenge, the trusts managers
    - The auditors use of technology
- receive the external auditors' annual plan, annual report, and accounts and recommend appropriate actions to the trust board in response to the findings
- to review the trust's insurance cover in compliance with its legal obligations
- evaluate the adequacy of the trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and management of risks and report this to the trust board
- oversee and approve the trust's programme of internal scrutiny
- receive an annual health and safety audit report and monitor any arising actions
- to seek assurance that the risks identified are those which may occur, for example, operational risk, financial risk, fraud risk, compliance risk, regulatory and legal risk, major accident
- ensure that risks are being addressed appropriately through internal scrutiny
- ensure that inspections of the trust premises and equipment take place (annually and at appropriate intervals), and a report is received identifying any issues

Remuneration Committee will monitor, evaluate and report on:

Staffing responsibilities

- review the staffing structure, ensuring that it meets the requirements of the school development plan, the curriculum and is affordable
- oversee the operation of the appraisal policy, including making arrangements for the senior executive leader's performance management
- review pay decision data to ensure that pay increments are awarded fairly
- ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) comply with equality legislation and safer recruitment practice

The Board will monitor, evaluate and report on:

Curriculum matters

- The broad educational needs of the pupils attending the trust's academies.
- Other curriculum issues such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.

Pupil achievement

- Pupil achievement and standards throughout the trust, including specific groups: those with special educational needs and disability (SEND), disadvantaged, looked after children and pupils with English as an additional language.

Wider outcomes

- The approach to
    - ensuring all pupils are given the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to manage their lives now and in the future.
    - improving pupils' health, wellbeing and physical literacy.
    - building the cultural capital of pupils.
    - promoting British values and providing pupils with a global outlook.
    - providing pupils with effective careers education.
- Issues related to pupil discipline such as levels of exclusions.
- Current and emerging patterns, trends and risks relating to attendance and behaviour
- Current and emerging patterns, trends and risks relating to pupil wellbeing.
- Engaging pupils, parents and the wider community in promoting and improving educational performance and wider outcomes for all pupils.

Standards

- Ensure that the trust's vision, ethos and strategy is adopted and applied by school leaders.
- Work with senior leaders to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to address them in line with the trust's strategic objectives.
- Monitor school performance and improvement through regular reviews of performance data, including exam results, attendance rates, and pupil progress.
- Ensure that the trust's curriculum is being provided to pupils in an appropriate manner for the school's context.
- Ensure that the required policies and procedures are in place and that the school is operating effectively in line with these policies.

- Establish a strong relationship with the headteacher in order to provide effective support and challenge, including providing feedback to their performance management process.

Stakeholder engagement

- Consult stakeholders – parents, staff and pupils – and use insights to inform decision-making.
- Help stakeholders to understand the trust's values and vision for the future.
- Provide the trust board with insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by the school's local community.

Safeguarding

- Foster a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff in the school.
- Ensure that the adopted safeguarding policies and procedures reflect the safeguarding challenges and context of the school.
- Monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and the effectiveness of procedures.
- Designate a link governor to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding.
- Monitor the school's estate, ensuring that appropriate policies are adopted and followed in order to keep pupils and staff safe.

SEND

- Ensure that the policy for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is implemented and adapted to the specific school context where necessary.
- Seek assurance that staff are trained to implement pupil strategies and support plans.
- Ensure pupils with SEND have the resources they need to succeed.
- Designate a link governor to take leadership responsibility for SEND.
- Monitor the overall effectiveness of the school's SEND provision, referring to pupil outcomes and other relevant data.