

Hope Learning Community Local Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Local Advisory Committee at a Glance

Name of trust:	HOPE LEARNING COMMUNITY
Name of committee:	LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (Formerly, Local Governing Body)
Date agreed:	August 2026
Review date:	Reviewed at least annually

Chair of committee:	The chair will be elected annually by the members of the committee. The Trust Board shall not unreasonably withhold their approval of the appointment and in the event of doing so will set out their reasons in writing. The Trust Board shall have the right to remove the Chair
Clerk:	The board will arrange a governance professional to clerk for the committee.
Membership:	The total membership shall not be less than 7 but not more than 13 The membership of the committee shall be comprised of • the Headteacher • a minimum of two elected parent representatives** • up to two staff representatives, elected by the staff body • up to 8 community representatives, whose appointment shall be subject to approval by the trust.
Quorum:	Quorum for the committee meeting will be any three members. Each question to be decided at a meeting shall be determined by a majority of votes of members present and eligible to vote on the question. In the event that there are equal votes on the question then the Chair shall have an additional casting vote.
Meetings:	The committee will meet at least once a term

The Trust Board establishes the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) and determines its functions through the Scheme of Delegation and these Terms of Reference.

The LAC supports the Trust Board by providing local oversight, assurance, challenge and community insight within the framework of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Key responsibilities

- Monitor the quality of education, inclusion and personal development.
- Monitor safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing.
- Listen to and represent the views of pupils, families, staff and the local community.
- Review compliance, risk and assurance information.
- Escalate significant concerns and risks through Trust governance arrangements.

In simple terms

School leaders manage.

The LAC monitors and seeks assurance.

The Trust Board holds ultimate accountability.

CONTENTS

Local Advisory Committee Terms of Reference	1
Local Advisory Committee at a Glance	1
1. Purpose	2
2. Membership	3
Term of Office	3
Chair	3
Governance Professional	3
Eligibility and Cessation of Office	3
3. Meetings	3
4. Responsibilities	4
4.1 Quality of Education, Inclusion and Personal Development	4
4.2 Safeguarding, Welfare and Wellbeing	4
4.3 Community and Stakeholder Engagement	4
4.4 Strategic Development	5
4.5 Compliance, Risk and Assurance	5
4.6 Local Governance Functions	5
5. Reporting and Escalation	5
6. Interests	6
7. Conduct and Commitment	6
8. Trust Board Powers	6
9. Expenses	7
10. Review	7

1. Purpose

The Local Advisory Committee (LAC) is established by the Trust Board to provide local oversight, assurance, challenge and stakeholder engagement within the framework of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. The Committee supports the Trust Board by:

- providing local knowledge and community insight;
- monitoring implementation of Trust priorities at school level;
- seeking assurance regarding the quality of education, inclusion, safeguarding, compliance and personal development;
- promoting effective engagement with stakeholders; and
- reporting significant concerns and risks through Trust governance arrangements.

The Committee does not manage the day-to-day operation of the school and does not exercise powers reserved to the Trust Board, CEO, Executive Team or Headteacher.

The governance flow, reporting arrangements and escalation procedures supporting these Terms of Reference are set out in **Appendix A – Governance Flow, Reporting and Escalation**.

2. Membership

The Committee shall comprise:

- The Headteacher (ex-officio).
- A minimum of two elected parent representatives.
- Up to two elected staff representatives.
- Community representatives approved by the Trust Board.

The total membership shall be not fewer than seven and not more than thirteen members.

The combined number of parents holding positions on the Committee, whether elected or appointed, shall not exceed 45% of the total membership.

Term of Office

Members, other than the Headteacher, shall serve a four-year term of office and may be reappointed or re-elected.

Chair

The Chair shall be elected annually by the Committee. The Trust Board reserves the right to remove the Chair where necessary.

Governance Professional

The Trust shall provide governance professional support to the Committee.

Eligibility and Cessation of Office

Members must comply with Trust requirements relating to eligibility, safeguarding checks, declarations of interest and acceptance of office.

A member shall cease to hold office if:

- their term of office expires and is not renewed;
- they resign in writing;
- they become ineligible to serve;
- they are removed by the Trust Board; or
- they fail to attend meetings in accordance with Trust requirements.

3. Meetings

- The Committee shall meet at least once each term.
- The quorum shall be three members.
- Decisions shall be determined by a majority vote of members present and entitled to vote.
- In the event of an equal number of votes, the Chair shall have a casting vote.

Members may attend meetings remotely where agreed by the Chair and Governance Professional.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Quality of Education, Inclusion and Personal Development

The Committee will:

- Monitor the quality of education, inclusion and personal development provided by the school.
- Review pupil progress, outcomes, attendance, behaviour and preparation for adulthood.
- Seek assurance that pupils receive appropriate provision, support and opportunities to meet their individual needs.
- Monitor progress against school improvement priorities, Trust priorities and post-inspection action plans.
- Monitor the impact of pupil premium and other additional funding.
- Provide constructive challenge and support to school leaders.

4.2 Safeguarding, Welfare and Wellbeing

The Committee will:

- Promote a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- Monitor safeguarding arrangements and seek assurance that Trust policies and statutory requirements are implemented effectively.
- Appoint a safeguarding link ambassador.
- Monitor pupil welfare and wellbeing arrangements.
- Monitor relevant health, safety and welfare matters.
- Monitor residential provision where applicable.
- Seek assurance that school food standards and related statutory requirements are met.
- Escalate concerns where assurance is insufficient or risks remain unresolved.

4.3 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The Committee will:

- Act as a link between the school, the Trust and the local community.
- Seek and reflect the views of pupils, families, staff and other stakeholders.
- Provide local insight, challenge and feedback to support Trust decision-making.
- Support consultation activities where required by legislation, Trust policy or the Trust Board.

4.4 Strategic Development

The Committee will:

- Provide local insight and feedback on proposals affecting the school's future development.
- Support consultation relating to significant changes affecting the school or its community.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Trust Board on matters relating to school capacity, age range, provision and organisational change where requested

4.5 Compliance, Risk and Assurance

The Committee will:

- Receive assurance regarding compliance, risk and statutory responsibilities.
- Monitor progress against agreed action plans and recommendations.
- Review significant risks and compliance matters affecting the school.
- Escalate significant, repeated, unresolved or high-risk concerns in accordance with Appendix A.

4.6 Local Governance Functions

The Committee will:

- Elect a Chair annually.
- Appoint link ambassadors as required.
- Support recruitment and succession planning for Committee membership.
- Provide local context and recommendations to the Trust Board when requested.
- Operate in accordance with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, Governance Calendar and governance guidance.

5. Reporting and Escalation

The Committee shall report to the Trust Board through the Trust's agreed governance reporting arrangements.

Where concerns are significant, unresolved, repeated, high-risk or outside agreed timescales, they shall be escalated in accordance with **Appendix A – Governance Flow, Reporting and Escalation**.

6. Interests

Members shall declare any pecuniary, personal or other interest that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

Where a conflict exists, the member may be required to withdraw from discussion, voting or both, as determined by the Chair.

The Trust shall maintain a register of interests in accordance with governance requirements.

7. Conduct and Commitment

Members shall:

- Uphold the Trust's vision and values.
- Act in the best interests of the Trust and its pupils.
- Respect confidentiality requirements.
- Comply with the Trust's Code of Conduct and governance policies.
- Attend meetings regularly and prepare appropriately.
- Undertake relevant training and development.
- Participate constructively in governance activity.
- Act as ambassadors for the Trust and school within the community.

8. Trust Board Powers

The Trust Board retains ultimate accountability for governance, standards, compliance and financial stewardship across the Trust.

The Trust Board may amend, suspend or remove any delegated responsibility contained within these Terms of Reference.

Where there are concerns regarding school performance, leadership, governance, compliance, financial management or any other matter affecting the effective operation of the school or Trust, the Trust Board may:

- amend the delegated responsibilities of the Committee;
- alter the membership, structure or operation of the Committee;
- require additional reporting or oversight arrangements;
- require support or intervention from Trust leaders; or
- exercise any power reserved to the Trust Board under the Scheme of Delegation.

The Trust Board may determine that a school operates with reduced delegated functions where there are concerns relating to leadership, governance or other significant matters.

9. Expenses

The Trust Board shall maintain a Governance Allowances and Expenses Policy. Committee members may claim approved expenses in accordance with that policy and any associated Trust procedures.

10. Review

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by the Trust Board.

Appendix A – Escalation Framework

Purpose

This appendix sets out the process for escalating significant concerns identified by the Local Advisory Committee (LAC).

The LAC is responsible for monitoring, seeking assurance and identifying concerns. It is not responsible for directing operational activity or resolving operational issues.

Escalation Principles

Most issues should be managed through normal school leadership and governance arrangements.

Escalation should be considered where concerns are:

- significant;
- unresolved;
- repeated;
- high risk;
- outside agreed timescales; or
- likely to affect pupil safety, welfare, outcomes or compliance.

Escalation should focus on the concern, associated risk and level of assurance obtained rather than operational detail.

Escalation Process

Stage 1 – Review

The Committee seeks assurance through reports, monitoring activities and discussion with school leaders.

Where concerns are identified, the Committee should consider:

- What evidence has been reviewed?
- Are we assured?
- What further assurance is required?

Stage 2 – Further Monitoring

Where assurance is incomplete, the Committee may:

- request additional information;
- undertake further monitoring activity;
- revisit the matter at a future meeting.

Stage 3 – Escalation

Where concerns remain unresolved or significant, the Committee may escalate the matter through Trust governance arrangements.

Escalation should identify:

- the issue;
- evidence considered;
- actions already taken;
- why the Committee is not assured.

Stage 4 – Trust Response

The Trust Board, Executive Team or relevant Trust officer will determine any further action required.

Urgent Escalation

Concerns relating to safeguarding, significant health and safety matters, serious compliance failures or other urgent risks should be raised without delay through the appropriate Trust reporting route.