

# The Propeller Academy Trust

## Local Governing Board Terms of Reference

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Propeller Academy Trust (PAT or Trust) is governed by a Board of Directors who are accountable to the Department for Education and have overall responsibility and decision-making authority for all of the work of the Trust. This includes the establishing and running of all schools operated by the Trust.
- 1.2. To support strong governance and effective decision-making, the Directors appoint a Local Governing Body (LGB) for each school in the Trust. The LGB is a committee of the Board of Directors as set out in the Articles of Association of the Trust.
- 1.3. These terms of reference apply to all schools within the Trust.
- 1.4. The Directors may review these terms of reference at any time but shall review them at least annually.
- 1.5. These terms of reference may only be amended by the Board of Directors.

### 2. Relationship between the Trust Board and the LGB

- 2.1. The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and it is ultimately responsible to the Department of Education in accordance with its funding agreements.
- 2.2. The Directors are the charity trustees and are responsible for the general control and management of the administration in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Trust.
- 2.3. The LGBs are established by the Directors in line with the Articles of Association.
- 2.4. The LGB will vote annually for a Chair and Vice Chair from within its membership. These positions cannot be held by Trust employees.
- 2.5. The LGB shall, in carrying out its role:
  - 2.5.1. Support, promote and communicate the PAT vision, strategy, values, and principles including when developing the individual vision, values, aims and objectives of the school.
  - 2.5.2. Be responsible to the Board of Directors and follow the expectations of the Seven Principles of Public Life and the agreed Trust Code of Conduct.
  - 2.5.3. Promote high standards through the agreed school improvement plan and aim to ensure that all pupils attend successful schools which provide them with a good education and support their well-being.
  - 2.5.4. Demonstrate an understanding of the key areas relating to the school and demonstrate best practice in governance to:
    - keep all pupils and staff safe and well
    - provide a good quality of education for pupils with SEN
    - ensure the estate is well managed

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- comply with all PAT and school policies, with statutory regulations and with the Trust's Articles of Association
  - ensure the budget is well spent
  - collect and consider stakeholder views and opinions about the school's provision and plans
  - Respond to complaints and grievances in line with the Trust policies.
- 2.5.5. In conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer or Director of Education, ensure the annual performance management of the Headteacher is undertaken and ensure that the Headteacher oversees the performance management of all other teaching staff.
- 2.5.6. Be proactive in seeking training to develop governor skills and plan proactively for succession of key roles within the LGB.
- 2.6. The Directors will support the work of the LGB by:
- Setting and communicating a clear strategic vision that allows the LGB to achieve its own aims and objectives within such a vision
  - Ensuring that Governors have access to high quality training and development opportunities
  - Ensuring that systems are in place that allow Governors to have the information they need to support and challenge the Headteacher and senior leadership team in a timely manner
  - Ensuring opportunities for communication and the sharing of ideas and views between the LGBs and the wider Trust governance structure
  - Providing LGB access to the Trust Board minutes and papers
- 2.7. Without prejudice to the Directors' rights to remove any Governor and to amend the terms of reference at any time, where the Directors have concerns about the performance of an LGB they may, amongst other actions:
- 2.7.1. Consult with the relevant LGB
- 2.7.2. Require the relevant LGB to adopt and comply with a governance action plan in such form as determined by the Directors
- 2.7.3. Suspend or remove any or all of the matters delegated to the LGB
- 2.7.4. Suspend or remove any or all of the Governors of the relevant LGB.
- 2.8. Directors may require a governance action plan where:
- 2.8.1. The quality of provision falls below that of the 'expected standard' according to the Ofsted criteria
- 2.8.2. Directors consider that the rigour, challenge, and support provided by the LGB are insufficient for the school to maintain at least good progress.

### 3. Constitution and Membership of the LGB

- 3.1. Members of each LGB will be known as *Governors*.
- 3.2. The Directors have the right to appoint people to the LGB as they determine.
- 3.3. The composition of the LGB shall be:

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- 3.3.1. **The Headteacher**
  - 3.3.2. **Up to two elected staff Governors.**
  - 3.3.3. **At least two elected parent Governors**
  - 3.3.4. **Up to seven community Governors**
  - 3.3.5. The number of Governors who are also employees of the Trust must not exceed one third of the total number of Governors.
- 3.4 The Directors, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Education for the Trust may attend any meeting of the LGB as an observer and without voting rights.

#### 4 Governor Appointment

- 4.4 The **Headteacher** is an *ex officio* member of the LGB because of their position.
- 4.5 **Staff and parent Governors** should be appointed following this process:
- 4.5.1 Seek nominations from all eligible to vote.
  - 4.5.2 If fewer nominations than vacancies are received, recommend appointment to the Directors.
  - 4.5.3 If equal nominations to vacancies are received, recommend appointment to the Directors.
  - 4.5.4 If more nominations than vacancies are received, an election must be held with all eligible voters having one vote. The nominee(s) with the most votes will be appointed.
- 4.6 The LGB should discuss and recommend potential **community Governors** to the Directors for approval. The potential Governor should have skills and experience useful to school governance.
- 4.7 The Directors may appoint **additional Governors** to the LGB through such process as they determine provided that a total number of Governors who are employees of the Trust does not exceed one third of the total number of Governors on the LGB.

#### 5 Term of Office

- 5.1 The term of office for any Governor will be four years, with the exception of the Headteacher.
- 5.2 The Headteacher's term of office commences on the date they take up the role and ends on the date they leave the role.
- 5.3 Subject to remaining eligible, any person may be reappointed or re-elected to the LGB.
- 5.4 Governors may resign at any time. Resignations should be notified in writing to the Chair of the LGB; if the Chair of the LGB resigns, this written notice should be to the Chair of the Directors. The Board should be notified of all changes to LGB membership and key positions including Chair, Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Lead Governor.

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5.5 The Chair and Vice-Chair shall cease to hold office if:

5.5.1 They cease to serve on the LGB

5.5.2 They become employees of the Trust

#### 6 Meetings, Quorum and Voting

6.1 The LGB shall meet at least six times every school year.

6.2 The quorum for a meeting of the LGB shall be five Governors or one-half of the membership of the LGB, whichever is the greater). This provision applies to every part of the meeting. Where the LGB comprises fewer than five members, the Trust will confirm the number of Governors required for a quorum of the LGB.

6.3 LGB meetings will be convened by the Clerk/Governance professional to the LGB who will send the Governors written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda and papers at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

6.4 Where there are urgent matters to consider, the Chair may waive the need for the seven days' notice of the meeting and substitute a shorter notice period.

6.5 Every matter to be decided at the LGB meeting shall be determined by a majority vote of the governors present and eligible to vote on the matter.

6.6 Each governor shall have one vote. Where there is an equal division of votes, the **Chair of the meeting** shall have a casting vote.

6.7 All Governors voting must be at the meeting where the decision is being taken either in person or via video conferencing. A Governor may not vote by proxy. If video conferencing is required at an in person meeting, the Governor must give reasonable notice to the Clerk and have access to the appropriate equipment.

6.8 A resolution in writing, signed by a majority of Governors shall be valid and effective as if it had been passed at an LGB meeting duly convened and held. Such a resolution may consist of several documents in the same form, each signed by one or more Governors such as emails or printed documents.

6.9 Any Governor who is also an employee of the Trust shall withdraw from that part of any LGB meeting at which remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal, or retirement are to be considered.

6.10 The convening of a meeting of the LGB and the proceedings conducted within that meeting, shall not be invalidated by reason or any individual not having received notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda.

6.11 The LGB may set up a Working Group (WG) to explore or oversee a time-limited project or issue. The majority of the membership of the WG must be governors, and any decision can only be made if the majority of attendees are governors and there are at least three present. At the time of the WG appointment, the LGB must agree terms of reference setting out:

6.11.1 The membership

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6.11.2 Its delegated responsibilities, if any.

### 7. Terms of Reference

Subject to the Trust's Articles of Association and agreed Scheme of Delegation, the LGB may make any decision necessary to fulfil its purpose as set out in paragraph 2.5. Primarily, this is to hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance and standards of the school.

**Specifically, the LGB is to:**

#### 7.1. Trust Governance

- 7.1.1. Maintain an accurate and up to date register of all Governor interests and publish this on the school website
- 7.1.2. Annually appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the LGB and remove these Governors from position by majority vote if necessary
- 7.1.3. Nominate community Governors to the Directors
- 7.1.4. Nominate staff and parent Governors to the Directors if there are fewer nominees than vacancies
- 7.1.5. Confirm preferred Clerking arrangements with the CEO
- 7.1.6. Agree LGB meeting dates and agendas in line with the Trust-wide requirements
- 7.1.7. Complete and review a Governor skills audit annually and plan and undertake training to support any identified priority areas
- 7.1.8. Complete annual self-evaluation of the LGB's performance

#### 7.2. Vision and strategy

- 7.2.1. Contribute to the Trust's discussions of the overarching Vision, Strategy, Ethos and Culture and key priorities
- 7.2.2. Develop and recommend to the Board the school's vision and its annual strategic priorities
- 7.2.3. Contribute to the Trust's discussions about its growth strategy
- 7.2.4. Approve and monitor the School Improvement Plan related to the agreed priorities of the school, the Trust's vision, and the school budget
- 7.2.5. Hold leaders to account for the delivery of the School Improvement Plan and the educational performance of the school
- 7.2.6. Approve the draft Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and monitor this for progress across the school year
- 7.2.7. Develop and/or approve school level policies where required in the Trust policy matrix
- 7.2.8. Adopt trust-wide policies where required in the Trust policy matrix

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7.2.9. Communicate with the central Executive Team and Directors to ensure effective information sharing and support

#### 7.3. Finance

- 7.3.1. Benchmark the performance of the school, ensuring impact and value for money has been achieved
- 7.3.2. Develop and recommend to the Board a budget plan to support delivery of the school's strategic priorities, that delivers a breakeven or better outturn
- 7.3.3. Monitor and review expenditure on a regular basis and ensuring compliance with the overall financial plan for the school
- 7.3.4. Monitor the school's agreed budget and work to any cash limits as determined by the Trust and based on the approved budget
- 7.3.5. Assist the Directors in complying with the Funding Agreement(s) where requested from time to time
- 7.3.6. Monitor compliance with statutory and contractual obligations including safeguarding, health and safety and major service contracts (such as catering, cleaning and grounds maintenance)
- 7.3.7. Notify the Trust of any changes to capitalizable assets used by the school
- 7.3.8. Observe the established levels of delegation and protocols

#### 7.4. Operations

- 7.4.1. Monitor implementation of and compliance with health and safety policy and procedures at school level, including school security
- 7.4.2. Monitor school estates to ensure they are safe, fit for purpose and well maintained
- 7.4.3. Seek funds for any necessary capital works
- 7.4.4. Monitor the ICT infrastructure and equipment ensuring it improves the effectiveness and/or efficiency of the school; ensure all monitoring and filtering standards for schools are met or being addressed
- 7.4.5. Review safeguarding arrangements in the school and receive regular monitoring reports ensuring compliance and demonstrating good practice
- 7.4.6. Appoint one of the LGB Governors (not Trust employees) to be the named Safeguarding Lead Governor and ensure they have Level 3 Safeguarding training
- 7.4.7. Appoint one of the LGB Governors (not Trust employees) to be the Filtering and Monitoring Lead Governor. This can be the same person as the Safeguarding Lead Governor
- 7.4.8. Ensure all LGB governors have completed Level 2 Generalist Safeguarding training and Prevent training

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- 7.4.9. Ensure all LGB Governors have read the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for the Trust and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- 7.4.10. Ensure some governors have completed Safer Recruitment training and Cyber Security training
- 7.4.11. Review safeguarding in school at least termly. *Areas to explore could include: site security, welcome process, policies and procedures, staff and governor training and awareness, awareness of DSLs, safeguarding lead governor/ filtering and monitoring lead governor; the impact of monitoring and filtering processes; the single central record and safer recruitment; pupil safeguarding records; pattern of referrals to other agencies; the taught safeguarding curriculum including online safety; Pupil and Parent voice and the school's ethos*
- 7.4.12. Review and agree the annual section 175 safeguarding audit before submission to the Board and the LA
- 7.4.13. Receive routine reports on the status of the Single Central Record for the school
- 7.4.14. Monitor and keep under review the school risk assessments and liaise with the CEO regarding any concerns
- 7.4.15. Report all issues of safeguarding concern to the Education & Safeguarding Committee

#### 7.5. Workforce

- 7.5.1. With the CEO, appoint and dismiss the Headteacher
- 7.5.2. Take accountability for the appointment and dismissal of school level staff by the Headteacher
- 7.5.3. With the CEO (or their representative) undertake annual performance management of the Headteacher
- 7.5.4. Recommend the pay/ progression for the Headteacher in line with the trust policy
- 7.5.5. Monitor the performance management of other teaching staff within the school ensuring the Headteacher carries out this function annually
- 7.5.6. Undertake panel hearings in line with school policies for staffing matters related to the Headteacher
- 7.5.7. Undertake panel hearings in line with school policies for staffing matters related to other staff members
- 7.5.8. Recommend the school level staffing structure
- 7.5.9. Monitor compliance with safer recruitment requirements
- 7.5.10. Monitor the quality of education (including the quality of the curriculum, quality of teaching and quality of assessment); hold the school to account for providing a good quality of education for all pupils
- 7.5.11. Monitor staff professional development and its impact

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- 7.5.12. Monitor staff wellbeing, workload, and attendance; review the impact of strategies and initiatives in place to support staff wellbeing and workload in school
- 7.5.13. Monitor vacancies, recruitment, and the use of agency staff; undertake exit interviews if required
- 7.5.14. Monitor staff statutory training and the impact of this

#### 7.6. Curriculum

- 7.6.1. Monitor the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the curriculum
- 7.6.2. Monitor effectiveness of the SEND provision at the school
- 7.6.3. Monitor progress and attainment for all pupils groups at the school
- 7.6.4. Monitor provision and outcomes for children with English as an additional language
- 7.6.5. Ensure pupils have opportunities for extended activities
- 7.6.6. Ensure the curriculum supports pupils making healthy choices, forming healthy relationships, and staying safe, including online

#### 7.7. Pupils and Learning

- 7.7.1. Agree and recommend the educational targets to the Board and, once approved, monitor progress towards the targets
- 7.7.2. Benchmark outcomes against school, trust, local and national data; include the benchmarking of key pupil groups
- 7.7.3. Determine use, and monitor impact of, the PE and sports premium
- 7.7.4. Agree the PE and sports premium expenditure reporting return before submission
- 7.7.5. Determine use, and monitor impact of, the pupil premium
- 7.7.6. Agree the pupil premium statement for publication on the website
- 7.7.7. Monitor attendance and persistent absence of pupils at the school
- 7.7.8. Monitor support for children looked after by the local authority and for previously looked after children
- 7.7.9. Monitor pupil behaviour data across different pupil groups and consider the impact of the school's behaviour policy
- 7.7.10. Review the Headteacher's decision to suspend or exclude in line with the DfE Guidance
- 7.7.11. Monitor pupils' wellbeing and how this is supported
- 7.7.12. Monitor safeguarding arrangements at school, ensuring compliance with relevant policies and procedures and ensuring strong outcomes for pupils

#### 7.8. Families and Community

- 7.8.1. Implement an admissions appeal process

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7.8.2. Investigate or consider complaints in line with the agreed complaints policy. Refer complaints about the Headteacher to the CEO

7.8.3. Engage with key stakeholders, sharing governor news and seeking their views; outcomes should be reported to Directors

#### **8. Review of the terms of reference**

8.1. The LGB will review its terms of reference at least annually and recommend any changes to the Directors.

8.2. The Directors will approve the LGB terms of reference.