



Governance Handbook

2023-24
(8th Edition)

Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) – Governance Philosophy

Governance leadership is Strategic leadership. It:

- Sets vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Delivers accountability
- Ensures that every decision made and every pound spent puts children first.

The Garden Analogy:

- Consider a fence separating your garden from your neighbour's. Your neighbour plants some bulbs
- You can lean over the fence and ask why those particular bulbs, in that particular place, at that particular time of year, the effect those bulbs will have on the rest of the plants in the garden, how much they cost and were they value for money
- You cannot jump over the fence, dig up the bulbs, plant different ones, rearrange them, dump other seeds on top of them, or pile a bunch of horse manure on top in order to 'helpfully' make them grow better
- The fence is the dividing line between strategic and operational.

Governance Handbook 2023-24

Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST)

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From the CEO...

Welcome

You are most welcome to the Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST). BEST comprises ten flourishing academies on ten different sites, delivering first choice education to over 5 000 pupils, from Early Years to Advanced Level Study. This provision is augmented by five BEST Nurseries and enriched by BEST Central, Educational and Financial Services. At the heart of BEST, is BEST House. This multi-agency Leadership and Governance Development Centre is part of BEST Charities.

Governance is through the Board of Trustees (the 'Board') and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Board is responsible for the effective operation of BEST and each academy therein. LGBs are committees of the Board. The primary role of the LGB is to ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld. They support and hold the Principal to account for the performance of pupils and staff and engage meaningfully with all parents/carers, enabling them to put forward their views at key points in their child's education.

Thank you

Thank you for volunteering to be a Governor. It is a terrifically rewarding and highly demanding role. Only the best educational standards are acceptable. As a Governor, you will gain skills appropriate to the scale and nature of the task, set the highest expectations and tackle any signs of underperformance and help to ensure that all pupils strive to be the best they can be and are well prepared for life.

The purpose of this handbook is twofold. Firstly, it outlines the core role and functions of the Board and the LGBs. Secondly, it provides a point of reference on all the legal duties of Governors, signposting to more detailed information, guidance and resources.¹ The handbook is rooted in the belief that good governance is essential to the success of any organisation and that the aim of governance within BEST is to ensure our mission is achieved by:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The handbook, now in its seventh edition, will be kept under review and updated to reflect feedback from the BEST community, the law affecting Governance and changes to education policy. This is an ongoing process.

I wish you every success and much enjoyment in your service to our pupils, staff and academies.



Dr Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer
& National Leader of Education

Date Adopted:	September 2023	Review Date:	Summer 2024
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¹ This handbook should read in conjunction with: the 'Memorandum and Articles of Association', accessed at www.bestacademies.org.uk/legal;

'Governance Handbook', accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

'School Inspection Handbook' accessed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook;

'Academy Trust Handbook' accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-trust-handbook>

A copy of each is provided in Governor Hub.

BEST: Mission, Vision, Values and Operating Principles

BEST

BEST is the legal entity responsible for the governance of all academies within the Trust. BEST shall have regard to (but for the avoidance of doubt shall not be bound by) any guidance as to the governance of academies that the Secretary of State may publish to the extent permitted by the governing documents.

The object of BEST is to advance education for the public benefit in the United Kingdom. This is achieved by establishing, maintaining, managing and developing academies². The academies will offer high quality education and collaborate and compete with each other to continually raise standards and best serve the wider community.

We believe in lean, focused and impactful governance. Leaders are empowered through a high autonomy and high accountability culture that **always puts children first**.

BEST Mission Statement

- to grow the BEST in everyone -

We believe in the importance of high expectations, hard work and the development of a community of academies where each of us strive to **'be the best that we can be'**.

BEST Vision Statement

BEST aims to:

1. Grow to comprise ten academies (7500 pupils)³ and eight nurseries. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure will be in place
2. Ensure all schools achieve a minimum Ofsted inspection Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile
3. Secure financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year and a minimum 5% of GAG in reserves.

BEST Values – We will:

Always put Children first

Our reference point question is 'how will this improve outcomes for children and enable them to go on and succeed in life?'

Collaborate to support and compete to challenge

Our academies work together to add value and compete to improve continually

Provide community-based education

Our academies form a coherent learning community at the heart of the Bedfordshire community

Have the courage to be compassionate

Our community treats all with trust, kindness and honesty

BEST Operating Principles – We will:

Deliver BEST outcomes

Outcomes will be in the top 20% nationally

Provide BEST opportunities

An extensive range of opportunities beyond the classroom will be provided to develop the whole person

Nurture talent

Our responsibility is to invest in our people and bring out the BEST in everyone

Operate a high autonomy, high accountability culture

Professionals will lead our system and take responsibility to continually raise standards

Lead through service

Leaders and followers will work together with mutual respect and shared responsibility

² References to academies also includes nurseries unless otherwise stated.

³ "Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child", White Paper (HM Government, March 2022)

Members

Members have ultimate responsibility for BEST achieving its charitable objectives. They oversee and hold the Trustees to account for the governance arrangements of the Trust. The Members agree the Articles of Association and have the power to appoint and remove Trustees. They comprise:

- one person appointed by BEST
- the Chairperson of the Trustees
- any person appointed under Article 15A.

Members receive copies of the Governance Handbook for comment. Through Governor Hub, they have access to agenda items and minutes for all meetings of the Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). Members meet twice a year. Firstly, to receive and approve BEST's Strategic Plan. Secondly, to receive and approve BEST's Financial Statements.

Members are bound by the undertakings contained in Article 8⁴

Reserved Matters

- To change the name of the Academy Trust
- To determine BEST's Mission Statement
- To change the Objects of the Academy Trust
- To change the structure of the BEST Board
- To amend the Articles of Association
- To pass a resolution to wind up the Academy Trust
- To appoint the auditors.

⁴ Companies Act 2006

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the effective operation of BEST and each academy therein. It provides ongoing challenge and support to the executive team and to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Board of Trustees meets six times per year plus any extraordinary meetings. Each Trustee receives a single vote.

The Board fulfils the following core functions through delegation of its powers to the CEO:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of BEST and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the BEST and making sure its money is well spent.

The Board currently comprises seven members, including the CEO. Future trustees may be appointed or elected under BEST's Articles. These latter set out the operation of the Board.

The Board is committed to monitoring and improving the quality and impact of governance. It achieved the National Governor Mark Quality Award.

Key Responsibilities

Vision, Strategy and Strategic Objectives

- Set BEST's vision, strategy and strategic objectives
- Support and challenge to the executive
- Regular engagement with all key stakeholders

Governance (Members/Trustees) – Executive Lead – Alan Lee

- Review and amend as necessary: The Articles of Association and BEST Governance Handbook
- Monitor the members of the Board (inc: recruitment, review, recruitment and succession planning)
- Determine BEST-wide and academy-specific policies in line with BEST's aligned autonomy model
- Overall accountability for compliance and the management of risk in accordance with BEST's Articles of Association, Funding Agreement, Academies Financial Handbook and all statutory regulations
- Ensure all members of the Board complete statutory safeguarding training
- Appointment/removal of the CEO and all members of the LGB.⁵

Quality of Education (including outcomes) – Executive Lead – Alison Wilshaw

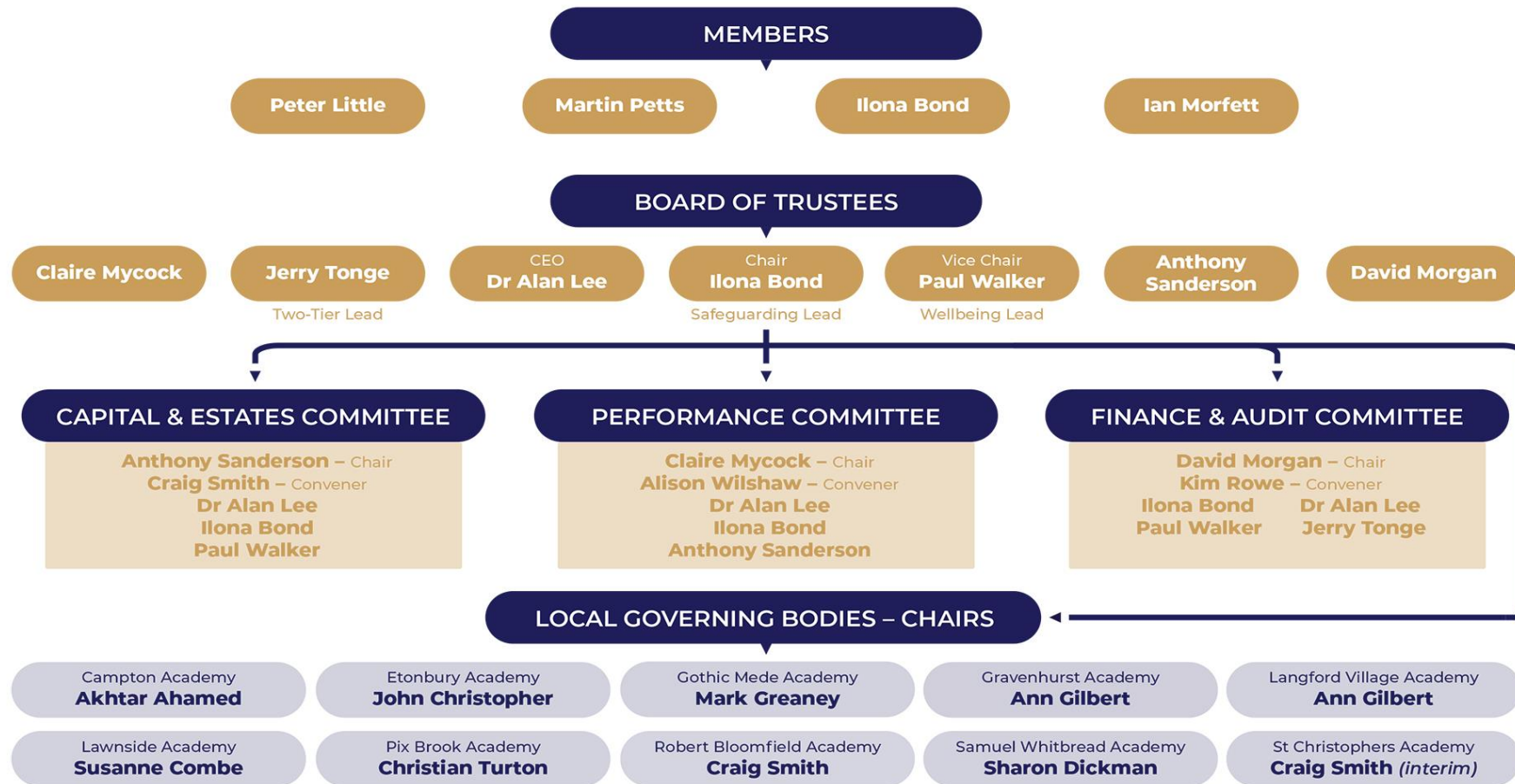
- Accountability for the performance and standards of all BEST academies/nurseries, including: pupil outcomes; standard of educational provision; pupil wellbeing; and, the quality of teaching
- To appoint, receive reports from and monitor the Performance Committee, ensuring challenge and support to the executive – Director of Education – over progress against BEST's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Ensure the continuing growth and success of BEST Education Services & School Improvement, providing a full suite of CPD/leadership opportunities for all staff, as well as ensuring a healthy supply of ECTs to BEST
- Ensure safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of BEST's process and policy
- To determine the BEST-wide curriculum policy to ensure provision of a broad and balanced education for all pupils and best value
- Ensure that high quality careers guidance is provided to pupils.

⁵ In extreme circumstances, the Board of Trustees reserves the right to remove a local governing body where there are concerns over its effectiveness/promotion of BEST's vision and replace it with an Interim Executive Board (IEB).

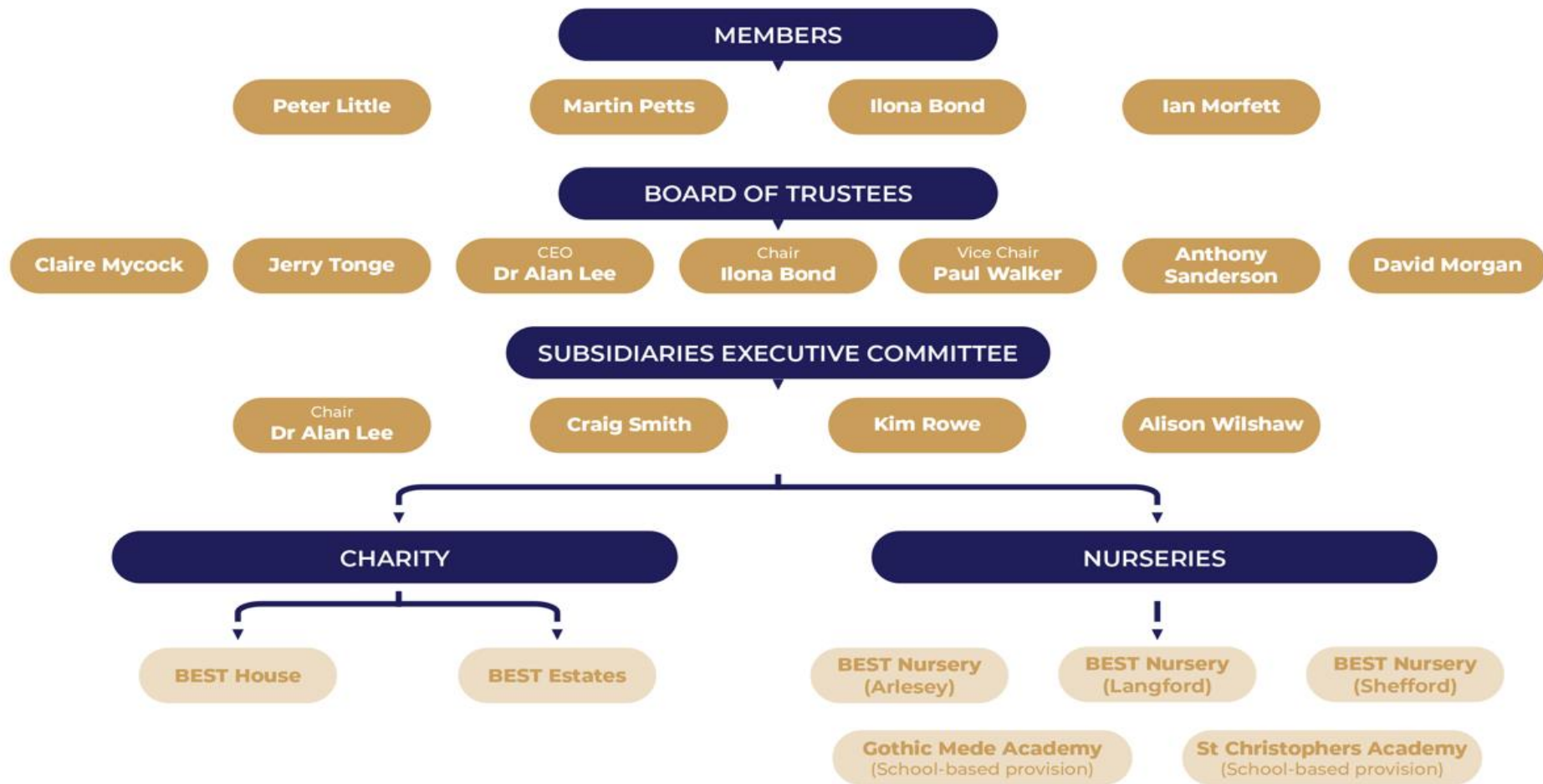
Finance – Executive Lead – Kim Rowe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish and review BEST’s Financial Scheme of Delegation • Appointment of internal auditors and make recommendation to Members on external audits • Approval and submission of BEST’s annual report and accounts, signed statement on regularity, probity and compliance, incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money • Ensuring financial controls so there is regularity, probity and value for money in relation to the management of public funds • To establish financial policies, including charging and remissions, staff expenses, procurement, etc. and review periodically • Approval of BEST’s funding model (including the top slice) and financial strategy • To appoint, receive reports from and monitor the performance of the Finance and Audit Committee • To appoint an Accounting Officer • To maintain a register of relevant personal and business interests.
Staff and HR – Executive Lead – Craig Smith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake the performance management of the CEO and support that of all the Principals⁶ • Approval of BEST’s Governance and Operations structures • To review and agree BEST-wide HR policies, including staff well-being, appraisal and pay progression.
Estates/other – Executive Lead – Craig Smith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a central property asset register, including asset evaluation • Maintain a central property conditions database, delivering capital improvement projects • Ensure compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, fire and asbestos risk assessments • Ensure best value through effective procurement processes and contract assessment (Inc.: educational, commercial and contractual legal advice).
Reserved Matters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the names of the Academies • Determine the mission, vision (inc: structure), values and operating principles of the Academies • Agree a BEST-wide Admissions Policy • Adopt or alter the constitution and terms of reference of any committee of the BEST board • Establish a trading company.

⁶ In the extreme circumstance of a Principal not achieving their performance management targets, responsibility for performance management of all staff at the academy concerned will be assumed by the Director of Education until the matter is resolved.

GOVERNANCE – ACADEMIES



GOVERNANCE – SUBSIDIARIES



Standing Committees of the Board

Performance Committee – Key Responsibilities

- Exercise the powers of the Board of Trustees in respect of holding the BEST Director of Education to account for all aspects of academy/nursery performance and standards
- Scrutinise the rationale for identifying strategic priorities, the accuracy of academy level and BEST-level data analysis, the clarity of purpose and speed of impact in addressing areas of underperformance or risk
- Identify strong practice or innovation and promote its wider dissemination.

Finance and Audit Committee – Key Responsibilities

- Ensure that the Board is fully aware of BEST's financial position and how this may change in the foreseeable future
- Provide assurances that key enabling resources are optimised and aligned with BEST's strategic aims and objectives
- Gain assurance on the effectiveness of:
 - Financial planning, budget-setting, performance analysis and financial reporting
 - Estates investments and management planning
 - Procurement processes and outcomes

Capital and Estates Committee – Key Responsibilities

- Ensure capital and estates priorities are consistent with Trust growth and strategic developments
- Ensure that the Board is fully aware of all aspects of the strategic management of the estate
- Oversight of the use of Capital Funds to ensure the estate is maintained, in order to meet the Trust's current and future education needs and creates a suitable environment that enhances both staff and pupil experience
- Ensure that all buildings across the estate provide safe and fit for purpose accommodation that meets statutory requirements.

Subsidiaries (Nurseries) Executive Committee – Key Responsibilities

- Ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables children and staff to excel
- Hold the Nursery Managers to account and ensure that the BEST approach to deliver care and progress are followed
- Monitor the use of resources to ensure best value and sustainability.

Subsidiaries (Charity) Executive Committee – Key Responsibilities

- Ensure the Charity fulfils its aims and objectives
- Oversight of BEST House management and strategic direction
- Ensure legal responsibilities are fulfilled.

Local Governing Bodies – Key Responsibilities

- Ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables pupils and staff to excel
- Hold the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which a **minimum expectation for all pupils of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20%** is strictly followed
- Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value.

Chief Executive Officer
Objectives
<p>The CEO is appointed by the Board to fulfil the following delegated objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the guiding values of BEST are faithfully upheld, revisited and reinforced • To provide executive leadership • To ensure the highest standards in every BEST academy • To act as the Accounting Officer for BEST • To ensure the Board of Trustees is appropriately informed through agreed mechanisms.
Key Responsibilities
<p>The CEO will be accountable to the Board for:</p>
Vision, values and operating principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that BEST’s vision, values and operating principles (VVO) are clearly communicated and adhered to • Liaise with the Department for Education (DofE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) and Charities Commission (CC) to ensure that BEST’s governance is clear, compliant and effective.
Executive Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and performance manage the executive leadership team that includes the Chief Operations Officer (COO), Chief Finance Officer (CFO), Director of Education (DofE) and Principals • Implement an operating model and staffing structure that delivers all the necessary functions of BEST effectively, efficiently and affordably.
Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards in every BEST academy, ensuring that outcomes in all BEST academies achieve the minimum expectation of the 50th percentile and that all academies achieve at least an Ofsted ‘Good’ category • Ensure robust quality assurance processes are in place at each academy and that LGBs carry out their duties effectively • Provide the Board with Safeguarding audits/reports to ensure that appropriate checks and balances are in place at all levels within BEST • Provide oversight of the implementation of the BEST-wide curriculum policy.
Accounting Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personally responsible to Parliament and to the EFSA’s accounting officer, for the financial resources under BEST’s control • Ensure high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly with regard to value for money, regularity and propriety.
Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the governance structures for BEST and governance scheme of delegation • Ensure that the Board and their sub-committees have access to all necessary data and information; complete skills audits and receive appropriate training; and, are fully supported in carrying out their work.

Chief Operations Officer

Objectives

The COO is appointed by the CEO in consultation with the Board to fulfil the following delegated objectives.

- To develop, implement and communicate a BEST Growth Strategy and approach
- To improve Governance across the BEST
- To ensure Central Services are providing high quality and value for money support to academies
- To ensure the Trust has highly effective systems for operational effectiveness and compliance
- To deputise for the CEO.

Key Responsibilities

The COO will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:

Grow and Develop BEST

- Deliver and communicate BEST's vision of ten academies (7500 pupils) and eight nurseries, within a primary-secondary education model
- Integrate new academies into BEST
- Nurture positive relationships with funders, decision makers and influencers over local and national plans for educational structure and estates developments.

Improve Governance

- Ensure effective governance across the Trust, particularly at LGB level
- Deliver appropriate training and support for governance
- Lead on accreditation and national benchmarks.

Effective management of central services

- Ensure core functions such as HR, IT support, marketing and communications, estates and capital developments are highly effective, compliant and work to support academies
- Provide excellent value for money from new and existing service provision including market testing
- Evolve to reflect and support academy needs
- Overall responsibility for risk management, including the oversight and presentation of the Risk Register to the Board of Trustees.

Operational Effectiveness

- Ensure compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, GDPR/Data Protection and HR (inc: safeguarding)
- Monitor operational efficiency across all areas of operational control and seeking service improvements
- Provide sources of external support and funding to improve effectiveness and capacity.

Deputising for CEO

- Take on extra responsibilities as appropriate and delegated by the CEO
- Represent BEST externally
- Attend activities as the CEO and/or BEST representative and uphold the highest standards for the Trust.

Chief Financial Officer

Objectives

The CFO is appointed by CEO in consultation with the Board to fulfil the following delegated objectives.

- To ensure the highest standards of financial management
- To ensure public funds are used as intended by Parliament
- To ensure rigorous procedures for preparing and monitoring financial plans
- To ensure appropriate financial arrangements operate day to day
- To ensure effective internal controls
- To ensure the Accounting Officer and Board of Trustees are appropriately informed through agreed mechanisms.

Key Responsibilities

The CFO will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:

Effective deployment of financial resources

- Ensure financial sustainability and sufficient reserves – minimum 5% of GAG funding – to support 2 tier changes and school improvement initiatives/projects
- Ensure financial planning establishes sustainability of the Trust through accurate budgeting, forward planning and regular monitoring
- To liaise with the Trust's appointed auditors and ensure the preparation of statutory accounts
- Ensure the Trust is able to meet short term financial obligations
- Ensure financial systems in place provide efficient integrated processes
- Provide professional advice and support to staff/LGBs/Trustees.

Compliance and reporting

- Ensure compliance with external statutory regulations – Companies Act, Charities Act, HMRC, DfE, ESFA
- External audit – maintain accurate accounting records and prepare an annual report and financial statements
- Internal Scrutiny – delivering assurance that the Trust's financial systems, controls, transactions and risks are sound and implemented
- Monthly management reporting to the Principals, Accounting Officer and members of the Finance and Audit Committee
- Attend and report to the Finance and Audit Committee on matters of probity and potential risk
- Financial management reports for Trustees board meetings.

Managing central and local finance staff

- Provide leadership and technical expertise
- Line managing central finance team
- Direct and provide support and training for local finance staff.

Director of Education

Objectives

The DofE is appointed by CEO in consultation with the Board to fulfil the following delegated objectives.

- To provide strategic leadership, clear direction and effective management for educational performance, standards and effectiveness (inc: staffing structures) across all BEST academies
- To develop BEST-wide strategies (inc: curriculum) and procedures for improving outcomes for all pupils in BEST academies
- To lead, develop and grow the BEST Improvement team, supporting our own schools and schools across CBC.

Key Responsibilities

The DofE will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:

Provide strategic leadership for educational performance, standards and effectiveness across all BEST academies

- Deliver and communicate BEST's vision of all schools achieving a minimum Ofsted inspection Good grade, with outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile
- Create an environment where staff are supported and challenged so that high performance is the norm and well-being is promoted
- Continue to improve and develop the BEST performance culture, analysing trends and developing interventions to raise standards and pursue excellence in all areas of academy performance
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across BEST and liaise with appropriate Senior Leaders to ensure development areas are addressed appropriately and expediently.

Deliver BEST-wide strategies and procedures to improve outcomes for all pupils in BEST academies

- Deliver a range of effective quality assurance mechanisms and compliance systems which lead to continued improvement across BEST
- Ensure a consistent and continuous focus on student achievement, using data to track and monitor the progress in every pupil's learning, and across BEST, analysing academy data and alerting the Principal and CEO to any underperformance
- Deliver a BEST approach to academy review including the organisation of whole academy (inc: staffing structures and curriculum), subject and aspect reviews in conjunction with Principals.

Lead, develop and grow BEST Education Services and School Improvement team

- Lead and manage BEST Education Services and School Improvement Team, ensuring strategic focus and high outcomes
- Keep up to date with major developments and changes in education and develop specific expertise within the Trust as required, weaving this into succession planning in each academy and across the Trust
- Produce a Growth Plan for the BEST School Improvement Team, annually.

Local Governing Bodies

The Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) are committees of the Board. It is the role of the LGBs to support and strengthen their Principal's leadership through robust challenge.

The core functions of the LGB are:

- ensuring the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld and clearly communicated, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables pupils and staff to excel
- holding the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which a **minimum expectation for all pupils of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20%** is strictly followed
- monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value.

Key Responsibilities

Vision, Strategy and Strategic Objectives – Executive Lead – Alan Lee

- Champion BEST's vision and values throughout the academy and wider community, nurturing a culture of consistent high expectations from all
- Support, monitor and challenge the Principal against targets set by BEST for the academy
- Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.

Governance (LGBs)^{7 8}– Executive Lead – Craig Smith

- Chair will provide reports and updates to the BEST Board as required, with a minimum annual report
- Maintain a clear and up to date record of all LGB members, notifying BEST of the need to recruit new governors
- Appoint from its number local governors with specific link responsibilities (e.g. safeguarding, pupil premium etc.)
- Conduct annual self-effectiveness/skills audit reviews to identify training requirements and ensure robust governance at academy-level.

Finance – Executive Lead – Kim Rowe

- Monitor the use of resources to ensure best value, ensure that robust curriculum-led financial planning is in place and adequate contingency and reserves are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning.
- Ensure appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium, SEND and sports premium funding
- Maintain a register of business and personal interests.

Staff and HR – Executive Lead – Craig Smith

- Support with the appointment/appraisal of the academy Principal
- Ensure an appropriate costed staffing structure is in place and that high quality CPD aligned to the curriculum is made available to staff
- Ensure compliance with BEST HR policies, taking into account the workload and well-being of staff
- Hold senior leaders to account against academy targets.

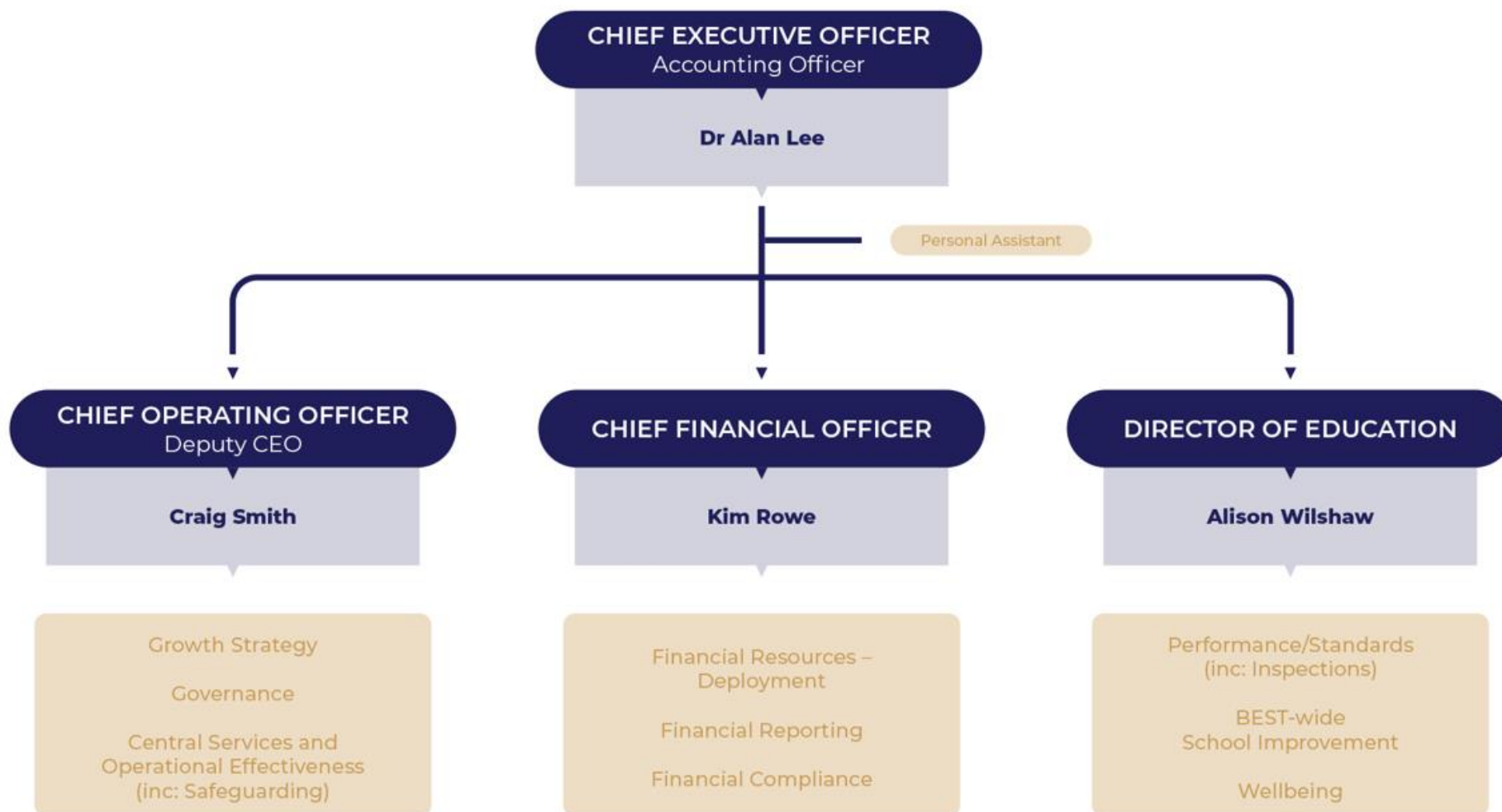
Quality of Education – Executive Lead – Alison Wilshaw

- Involvement in the construction/approval of both the Academy Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation documents
- Ensure the curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the academy
- Monitor the performance of the academic with particular respect to the progress and attainment of individuals and Groups (including the most disadvantaged and SEND), pupil well-being and staff appraisal.

⁷ All LGB members, including the Chair and Vice Chair, will be appointed by BEST. The LGB must include a minimum of two elected parent representatives and may include a Principal/representative from another BEST academy, subject to agreement.

⁸The model for LGBs contained in Appendix 12, p53. A degree of variation from this may be employed following approval from the COO.

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE CHART



Appendix 1: Scheme of Delegation

Introduction

The Scheme of Delegation (known as ‘Scheme’ hereafter) sets out the delegated powers between the different bodies involved in the governance and operation of the Bedfordshire Schools of Trust (BEST). The different bodies include:

- a. Members
- b. Board of Trustees
- c. Board Sub-Committees
- d. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Accounting Officer
- e. Chief Operations Officer (COO)
- f. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)
- g. Principals (Ps).

The delegated powers are broken down into different levels in line with BEST’s principles of governance, leadership and operations. The delegated autonomy for individual schools is aligned with the need for BEST to fulfil its charitable and corporate responsibilities to the Department for Education (DfE), Education Skills Funding Agency (EFSA), Charities Commission, HMRC and Companies House.

The different levels of delegated power are listed as:

- a. R = Responsible
- b. A = Accountable
- c. C = Consulted
- d. S = Support
- e. I = Informed⁹

The Scheme should be read in conjunction with:

- a. the Terms of Reference for the relevant body
- b. the Job Roles for the positions referenced
- c. Financial Scheme of Delegation
- d. BEST Policy Cycle
- e. BEST Quality Assurance Calendar.

⁹ In cases where delegated powers sit with more than one body, reading below left to right, the first mentioned body has seniority.

1. Scheme of Delegation

1. Vision, strategy and strategic objectives. Executive Lead: Alan Lee

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
1.1	Setting BEST's vision, strategy and strategic objectives (BEST Improvement Plan, in the agreed format)		A	C	R	S	S	S
1.2	Championing BEST's vision, values and strategic objectives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
1.3	Regular engagement with key (internal) stakeholders	A	I	I	S	R	S	S
1.4	Setting school vision, strategy and strategic objectives (School Improvement Plan, in the agreed format)		A	I	S	S	A	R
1.5	Regular engagement with the school ¹⁰ community	A	I	I	S	S	A	R
1.6	Lead on BEST's Communications (inc: Public Relations) Strategy		A	C	C	R	S	S
1.7	Lead on the school's Communications (inc: Public Relations) Strategy, aligned to BEST's vision and values		A	I	S	A	A	R
1.8	Determine the scope of shared services to be delivered by BEST		A	C	R	C	I	C
1.9	Consider requests from schools to join BEST, leading on due diligence processes as required		A	C	R	C	I	I
1.10	Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and students		A	S	R	S	A	R
1.11	Set and approve amendments to BEST's admissions policy		A/R	I	S	S	S	S

¹⁰ In all cases, the term 'school' also includes 'nursery'.

2. Scheme of Delegation

2. Governance. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
2.1	Board member monitoring (inc: provision of training, support, recruitment and succession planning)		A	I	R	S	S	S
2.2	LGB member monitoring (inc: provision of training, support, recruitment and succession planning)		A	I	S	R	A	S
2.3	Provide reports and updates to the Board, including annual report		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.4	Members: appoint/remove	A	I	I	I	I	I	I
2.5	Trustees: appoint/remove	A	R	C	C	I	I	I
2.6	LGB Chair: appoint/remove		R	I	C	S	I	I
2.7	LGB Members: appoint/remove		R	I	C	S	C	C
2.8	Governance Professional to Trustees: appoint/remove		C	C	R	C	I	I
2.9	Governance Professional to LGBs: appoint/remove		I	I	C	C	C	R
2.10	Maintain a clear and up to date record of all LGB members, their terms of office and notifying BEST of the need to recruit new governors		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.11	Conduct annual skills audit to identify training needs		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.12	Articles of Association: review/agree	A	R	C	C	C	I	I
2.13	Governance Handbook (inc: Scheme of Delegation): review/agree		A	C	R	C	C	C
2.14	Governance structure for BEST: establish and review		A	C	R	S	S	S
2.15	Determine BEST-wide and school specific policies, in line with BEST's aligned autonomy model		A	S	R	C	S	C
2.16	Monitor compliance with statutory regulations and BEST's policies ¹¹		A	S	R	R	S	S
2.17	Auditing and reporting against matters of compliance		A	C	R	R	I	I

¹¹ Education Policies rest with the CEO and non-education with the COO.

3. Scheme of Delegation

3. Quality of Education (inc: outcomes). Executive Lead: Alison Wilshaw

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
3.1	Evaluate and report on progress against BEST's strategic priorities		A	A	R	S	S	I
3.2	Present up to date: school self-evaluation, school improvement plans, curriculum led finance models and staffing structures		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.3	Agree, monitor and report on progress against BEST-wide key outcome targets for all students ¹²		A	A	R	S	S	S
3.4	Report on progress against targets set in the school SEF		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.5	Agree, monitor and report on progress against school outcomes targets for all students		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.6	Discharge duties in respect of students with SEND		A	A	I	S	A	R
3.7	Provision of student and staff well-being programmes throughout the academic year		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.8	Ensure a BEST-wide Safeguarding structure is in place, with designated Safeguard Trustee, policy framework and annual external audits for all schools		A	A	R	C	I	I
3.9	Provide a full suite of CPD and leadership opportunities through the BEST School Improvement Team		A	A	R	C	S	S
3.10	Ensure the continuing growth and success of the BEST School Improvement Team		A	A	R	C	S	C
3.11	Determine that a school should be a BEST Cause for Concern		A	A	R	C	I	I

¹² All students includes the most disadvantaged, the most able and SEND

4. Scheme of Delegation

4. Finance. Executive Lead: Kim Rowe

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
4.1	Establish and review the Financial Scheme of Delegation annually		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.2	External auditors: appoint/remove	R	A	A	S	I	I	I
4.3	Agree BEST funding model and financial strategy to support delivery of key priorities		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.4	Agree budget plan to support delivery of school key priorities		A	A	R	S	I	C
4.5	Review and approve BEST-wide procurement strategies		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.6	Receive and respond to external auditors' report		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.7	Submit annual report and accounts, including accounting policies, signed statement of regularity, propriety and compliance incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.8	Approval of strategies for ensuring financial control, regularity and probity in spend of public funds		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.9	Plan manage and monitor monthly expenditure and financial reports, and identify actual or potential items of budget overspend/underspend		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.10	Monitor the use of resources to ensure best value, ensuring that robust curriculum-led financial planning is in place and adequate contingency and reserves – 5% of GAG funding – are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.11	Ensure appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium, SEND and sport premium funding		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.12	Maintain a school-based register of business and personal interest		A	A	C	I	A	R

5. Scheme of Delegation

5. Staff and HR. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
5.1	CEO: appoint/remove		A	A	I	I	I	I
5.2	CEO: appraisal/pay		A	A	I	I	I	I
5.3	COO: appoint/remove		A	A	R	I	I	I
5.4	COO: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	I	I	I
5.5	Central Team: appoint/remove		A	A	R	C	I	I
5.6	Central Team: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	C	I	I
5.7	Central Team: CPD/wellbeing		A	S	C	R	I	I
5.8	Principal: appoint/remove		A	A	R	C	S	I
5.9	Principal: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	I	S	I
5.10	Principal: CPD/wellbeing		A	S	R	C	S	S
5.11	School staff: appoint/remove		A	I	I	I	C	R
5.12	School staff: appraisal/pay		A	I	I	I	C	R
5.13	School staff: CPD/wellbeing		A	I	I	S	C	R
5.14	Agree terms and conditions of employment		A	A	R	C	I	C
5.15	Agree BEST staffing structure		A	A	R	C	I	C
5.16	Agree school staffing structure		A	I	C	S	A	R
5.17	Review and agree BEST-wide HR Policies, including staff appraisal and pay progression		A	A	R	C	C	C
5.18	Lead negotiations with Trade Unions on the development of consistent HR policies and procedural changes		A	A	C	R	S	S

6. Scheme of Delegation

6. Estates. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
6.1	Maintain a central property asset register, including asset evaluation		A	A	S	R	S	S
6.2	Maintain a central property conditions database, delivering capital improvement projects, in line with the agreed methodology utilising the Schools Condition Allocation (SCA)		A	A	S	R	S	S
6.3	Maintain school premises for routine condition, repair and decorating utilising the school budget and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)		A	A	S	S	S	R
6.4	Ensure compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, fire and asbestos risk assessments etc.		A	A	S	R	S	R
6.5	Ensure best value through effective procurement and contract assessment (inc: educational, commercial and contractual legal advice)		A	A	C	R	I	C

7. Scheme of Delegation

7. Other. Executive Lead: Alan Lee

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
7.1	Responsible for handling and monitoring of complaints ¹³		A	I	A	R	R	S
7.2	To review permanent exclusions, considering whether to uphold the Principal's decision or to direct reinstatement of excluded student		A	I	R	I	A	S
7.3	Responsible for monitoring and developing the school's links with the community, parents, carers and guardians		A	I	I	A	A	R

¹³ All settings must notify the Trust immediately of any complaints which have been escalated to Ofsted and share a copy of all relevant reports

Standing Committees/Abbreviations

Performance Committee (as required forms a sub-committee to deal with related HR matters) Finance and Audit Committee

CEO – Chief Executive Officer (and Accounting Officer)

Executive delegation to:

- a. Chief Operations Officer - Operations
- b. Chief Financial Officer – Finance¹⁴
- c. Director of Education – Education
- d. Governance Professional to the Board – Governance

COO – Chief Operating Officer

Executive delegation to:

- a. Compliance Officer – Compliance
- b. Operations Manager - Operations
- c. Communications Manager – Communications

CFO – Chief Finance Officer

Executive delegation to:

- a. Finance team – Finance

DfE – Director of Education

Executive delegation to:

- a. Director of Training and Professional Development
- b. Director of English
- c. Director of Mathematics
- d. Lead Teachers

¹⁴ See job roles for positions referred to here.

1: Scheme of Financial Delegation	
1. Powers and Duties Reserved for the <u>Board of Trustees</u>	
General	
1.1	Approval of a written scheme of delegation of its financial powers and duties to its Finance Committee, the Chief Executive Officer, the trusts Chief Financial Officer and other staff. The Board must approve a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal controls and that is reviewed annually, and immediately when there has been a change in trust management or organisational structure. The scheme of delegation should be operated in conjunction with the Financial procedures and regulations of BEST.
Budgets/Budgetary Control	
1.2	Ensure the trust’s assets and funds are used only in accordance with legislation, their articles of association, their funding agreement and the Academies Trust Handbook
1.3	Formally approving the annual Trust budget
1.4	Considering budgetary control reports from the Finance and Audit Committee at every meeting, with relevant explanations and documentation where required
1.5	Authorisation of all virements in excess £250 000 between budget headings. Details of all virements approved and authorised by the Finance and Audit Committee are to be formally notified to the Board of Trustees
Purchasing	
1.6	Maintenance of a Register of Pecuniary and Business Interests for all Members, Trustees, Governors and Trust staff with financial responsibilities
1.7	Authorisation of the award of tenders above £250 000
Income	
1.8	Authorisation of the write off of debts not collectable (the Secretary of State's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academies Trust Handbook)
Security of Assets	
1.9	Authorisation of the disposal of individual items of equipment and materials that have become surplus to requirements, unusable or obsolete with a residual value in excess of £20 000
Accounts and Audit	
1.10	Members must appoint an auditor to give an opinion on whether their annual accounts present a true and fair view of the trust’s financial performance and position. Trusts should retender their external audit contract at least every five years.
1.11	Approval of the audited financial statements
1.12	Informing the ESFA if it suspects any irregularity affecting resources.

2: Scheme of Financial Delegation

2. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Finance and Audit Committee

General

2.1	Exercising the powers and duties of the Board in respect of the financial administration of the Trust, except for those items specifically reserved for the Board of Trustees and those delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, and other staff
2.2	Reporting on decisions taken under delegated powers to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees

Budgets/Budgetary Control

2.3	Reviewing the annual Trust budget and recommending its acceptance, or otherwise to the Board of Trustees
2.4	Considering budgetary control reports on the Trusts financial position at every meeting, taking appropriate action to contain expenditure within the budget and report to the Board of Trustees
2.5	Reviewing the virement of sums between budget heads over £100 000 and up to £250 000 as approved and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer, which are to be formally notified to the Finance and Audit Committee who shall minute the notification
2.6	Approving virements between budget headings of over £100 000 and up to £250 000
2.7	Reporting to the Board of Trustees all significant financial matters and any actual or potential overspending

Purchasing

2.8	Authorising the award of orders and contracts over £100 000 and up to £250 000
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Income

2.9	Authorisation to write off debts not collectable between £10 000 and up to £45 000 (the secretary of state's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academy Trust Handbook.)
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Security of Assets

2.10	Authorising the disposal of individual items of equipment and materials that have become surplus to requirements, unusable or obsolete with a residual value above £20 000 and reporting such authorisations to the Board of Trustees
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Accounts and Audit

2.11	Reviewing the draft financial statements and external audit reports and highlighting any significant issues to the Board of Trustees
2.12	Receiving the reports of the auditor on the use of resources, systems of internal financial control, and discharge of financial responsibilities and highlighting any significant issues to the Board of Trustees
2.13	Receiving annual reports from independent auditors on our internal scrutiny
2.14	Monitoring outcomes of any internal scrutiny reviews that are undertaken.

3: Scheme of Financial Delegation

3. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Chief Executive Officer

General

3.1 The Chief Executive Officer has delegated powers and functions in respect of internal organisation, management and control of the Trust, the implementation of all policies approved by the Board of Trustees and for the direction of teaching and the curriculum.

The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for:

Budgets/Budgetary Control

3.2 Reviewing income and expenditure reports and highlighting actual or potential overspending to the Finance and Audit Committee

3.3 Approving virements between budget headings of up to £100 000 and reporting such approval to the Finance and Audit Committee

Financial Management

3.4 Ensuring the arrangements for collection of income, ordering of goods and services, payments and security of assets are in accordance with the Financial Regulations

Purchasing

3.5 Authorising all orders and contracts up to £100 000

3.6 Ensuring that all contracts and agreements conform to the Financial Regulations

Payroll and Personnel

3.7 Approval/veto of proposals and authorisation of changes to the Trust's establishment

3.8 Ensuring there is an equitable remuneration policy that recognises responsibility, skills, experience and diversity and delivers value for money to the Trust

3.9 Ensuring payroll processes are delivering timely and accurate payments to staff

Income

3.10 Authorisation to write off debts not collectable up to £10 000 (the secretary of state's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academies Trust Handbook.)

Security of Assets

3.11 Ensuring that there are annual independent checks of assets and the asset register

3.12 Ensuring that proper security is maintained at all times for all buildings, furniture, equipment, vehicles, stocks, stores, cash, information and records etc. under his/her control

Accounts and Audit

3.13 The operation of financial processes, ensuring that adequate operational controls are in place and that the principles of internal control are maintained

3.14 Ensuring ongoing in-year QA processes are in place via independent scrutiny and internal checks.

4: Scheme of Financial Delegation

4. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Chief Finance Officer

The CFO shall be responsible for the strategic financial planning in conjunction with the CEO and Executive Principals relating to:

Budgets/Budgetary Control

4.1	Supporting Principals with the budgeting process and presenting the annual draft budget plan for consideration and approval by the Finance and Audit Committee and Board of Trustees
4.2	Monthly monitoring of expenditure and income against the approved budget and submitting reports on the Trusts financial position to every meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee and at least 6 times a year to the Board of Trustees. Any actual or potential overspending representing a financial risk to the Trust shall be reported to the Finance and Audit Committee
4.3	Approving virements between budget headings up to a value of £100 000 and reporting such approval to the Finance and Audit Committee
4.4	Authorising requests for expenditure from reserves up to £10 000 where the amount of the request does not reduce the reserves below the required minimum of 5% of GAG Funding. All spending requests from reserves above £10 000 must be considered by the Finance and Audit Committee

Purchasing

4.5	Ensuring that the individual academies are maintaining a register of formal contracts entered into, amounts paid and certificates of completion and are retaining the quotes obtained for goods, works and services. Whilst overall responsibility for this sits with the CFO, maintenance of such records can be delegated to the COO and Local Finance Assistants
4.6	Ensuring that all correct invoices are duly certified by authorised staff before payments
4.7	Ensuring the appropriate division of duties between staff responsible for processing orders, receiving deliveries and processing payments
4.8	Authorising all orders and contracts up to £100 000

Payroll and Personnel

4.9	Authorising the monthly payroll for the central staff and for other locations if necessary
4.10	With the CEO, jointly authorising any changes to the staff structures in the individual academies
4.11	Ensuring salaries are calculated correctly and paid only to employees of the Trust
4.12	Authorising any changes in salary to existing staff after consultation with the CEO

Banking Arrangements

4.13	Maintaining proper records of accounts and reviewing monthly bank reconciliations
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Accounts and Audits

4.14	The operation of financial processes within the Trust, ensuring that adequate operational controls are in place and that the principles of internal control are maintained
4.15	Ensuring that full, accurate and up to date records are maintained in order to provide financial and statistical information
4.16	Ensuring that all records and documents are available for audit by the appointed external auditors

Insurances

4.17	Ensuring that arrangements for insurance cover are in place and adequate
4.18	Notifying the Finance and Audit Committee on any eventuality that could affect the Trust's insurance

5: Scheme of Financial Delegation

5. Powers and Duties Reserved for all Other Staff

Members of staff with delegated responsibilities should be aware that these must be exercised in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Academy Principals and Nursery Managers:

5.1	Setting their annual budget
5.2	Authorising monthly payroll, CFO can authorise in the Principals' absence
5.3	Checking and certifying monthly statements of expenditure against their delegated budgets
5.4	Reporting any errors or irregularities to the Trust CEO and CFO. Any actual or potential overspend shall also be reported to the CEO and CFO

Delegated Budget Holders:

5.5	Authorising order requisitions provided they are within the scope and remaining balance of their delegated budget
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Finance Co-ordinator

5.6	Provides support to the CFO and Finance Assistants in carrying out their responsibilities to ensure a consistent approach across the trust, ensures transactions are recorded accurately, does monthly monitoring checks and provides advice, training and cover
5.7	Responsible for day to day transactions and reporting for the executive account, reconciling payroll control accounts, managing capital income and expenditure, recording fixed assets and depreciation, completing statutory reporting

Finance Assistants

5.8	Ensuring that all income is accurately accounted for and is promptly collected and banked intact
5.9	Ensuring that all expenditure is accurately accounted for and invoices are correctly authorised for payment
5.10	Placing orders
5.11	Keeping all relevant audit paperwork associated with income, expenditure, petty cash, purchase orders, contracts
5.12	Produce at least termly statements of income and expenditure to budget holders
5.13	Produce monthly management accounts
5.14	Checking monthly payroll payments and reporting any errors to the payroll provider. Checking data held by payroll provider matches the academies local accounting system on an annual basis
5.15	Assisting in setting the annual budget.

Security of Assets

The Finance Teams are responsible for:

5.16	Maintaining a permanent and continuous register of all items of furniture, equipment, vehicles and plant. Items over £5 000 are capitalized and added to the Fixed Asset Register
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Information and Communication Systems

The COO is responsible for:

5.17	Maintaining the standards of control for such systems in operation within the Trust to include the use of properly licensed software, and for the security and privacy of data in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
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Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
Ordering Goods and Services	Up to £5 000	Budget Holder, Principal &/or Trust CFO	Selection from preferred supplier list unless agreed otherwise with CFO
	£5 001 to £25 000	Principal & Trust CFO	Minimum of 3 quotes
	£25 001 to £100 000	Trust CEO & CFO	Minimum of 3 quotes
	£101 000 to £250 000	FAC or Chair of FAC (reported at Board meeting)	Formal tendering process, FTS where appropriate
	Over £250 000	Board of Trustees	Formal tendering process, FTS where appropriate
Contracts and Expenditure	Up to £25 000	Principals	
	Up to £100 000	CEO/CFO	
	£101 000 to £250 000	FAC or Chair of FAC (reported at Board meeting)	
	>£250 000	Board of Trustees	
Expenditure from Reserves	Up to £10 000	Trust CFO	
	Over £10 000	FAC or Chair of FAC (reported at Board meeting)	
Signatories for cheques, BACS payment authorisations and other bank transfers	Any	Two signatories from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trust CEO ○ Trust CFO ○ Trust COO ○ Principals ○ Vice Principals 	
Signatories for ESFA grant claims and ESFA returns	Any	Two signatories from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trust CEO ○ Trust CFO 	
Virement of budget provision between budget heads	Up to £25 000	Principals	
	£25 001 to £100 000	Trust CEO & CFO reporting to the Finance and Audit committee	
	£100 001 to £250 000	FAC or Chair of FAC (reported at Board meeting)	
	Over £250 000	Board of Trustees	
Disposal of Assets	Up to £20 000	CFO	
	Over £20 000	CEO & Board of Trustees	
Write-off of bad debts	Up to £10 000	CEO	
	Over £10 000	Board of Trustees & ESFA approval	
Purchase of an asset through a finance lease		ESFA approval	
Purchase or sale of any freehold property		ESFA approval	
Granting or take up of any leasehold or tenancy agreement exceeding 3 years		ESFA approval	

APPENDIX 3: Schedule of BEST Meetings

Meeting Date	Time	Meeting	Location
14 October 2023	9:30am	BEST Annual Governor Conference	BEST House
12 December 2023	11:00am	AGM – Members & Trustees	BEST House
19 September 2023	12:30pm	BEST Members’ Meeting	BEST House
19 September 2023	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
12 December 2023	9:30am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
23 January 2024	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
19 March 2024	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
14 May 2024	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
2 July 2024	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
14 November 2023	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee (Audit)	Virtual
5 March 2024	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee	Virtual
18 June 2024	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee (Budget)	Virtual
21 November 2023	9:00am	BEST Performance Committee (incl. Principals)	BEST House
5 March 2024	12:30pm	BEST Performance Committee	Virtual
18 June 2024	12:30pm	BEST Performance Committee	Virtual
12 September 2023	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
9 January 2024	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
30 April 2024	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
12 September 2023	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
9 January 2024	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
30 April 2024	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
14 September 2023	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
19 October 2023	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
23 November 2023	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
18 January 2024	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
15 February 2024	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
21 March 2024	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
9 May 2024	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
20 June 2024	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
8 December 2023	9:30am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
1 March 2024	9:30am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
21 June 2024	9:30am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
13 September 2023	9:30am	Governance Professionals’ Forum Meeting	BEST House
31 January 2024	9:30am	Governance Professionals’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
15 May 2024	9:30am	Governance Professionals’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
26 September 2023	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
8 November 2023	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
18 January 2024	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
5 March 2024	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
1 May 2024	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
20 June 2024	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
31 October 2023	9:30am	BEST Central Team Meeting	BEST House
27 February 2024	9:30am	BEST Central Team Meeting	BEST House
10 June 2024	9:30am	BEST Central Team Meeting	BEST House

BEST Policies			
POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
ABSENCE (LEAVE)	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
ABSENCE (SICKNESS)	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
ANTI-BRIBERY	FINANCE	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
APPRAISAL PROCEDURE FOR SUPPORT STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
APPRAISAL PROCEDURE FOR TEACHING STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
CAPABILITY PROCEDURE FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
CHARGING AND REMISSION	FINANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	Annually
COMPLAINTS (TRUST LEVEL ONLY)	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
CYBER SECURITY	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	Annually
DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) POLICY & PRIVACY NOTICES	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
DISCRETIONS (LGPS)	FINANCE	MANDATORY	3 yearly
DISCIPLINARY	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
ECT POLICY	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM	MANDATORY	Annually
EQUALITY POLICY	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	Annually
FAMILY RELATED LEAVE	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
FINANCIAL PROCEDURES	FINANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
FLEXIBLE WORKING	HR	RECOMMENDED	Annually
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	3 yearly
GRIEVANCE POLICY	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
HARASSMENT & BULLYING	HR	INCLUDED IN GRIEVANCE POLICY	n/a
HEALTH & SAFETY	H&S	MANDATORY	Annually
MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	Annually
PAY POLICY	HR	MANDATORY	Annually

BEST Policies Contd...

POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	HR	MANDATORY	3 yearly
REDUNDANCY PROCEDURE	HR	MANDATORY	Annually
RESERVES	FINANCE	RECOMMENDED	Annually
SAFEGUARDING POLICY (TRUST TEMPLATE)	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	Annually
SUPERVISION POLICY (DSL SUPERVISION)	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
WHISTLEBLOWING	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly
TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AGREEMENT (TURA)	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	3 yearly

Academy Policies

POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (OR E-SAFETY) – <i>referenced in safeguarding policy</i>	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	Not stated
ACCIDENT, INCIDENT AND NEAR MISS REPORTING PROCEDURE/POLICY	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED UNDER HSE GUIDANCE	Not stated
ANTI-BULLYING	SCHOOL	STRATEGY MANDATORY – CAN BE INCLUDED IN BEHAVIOUR POLICY	Not stated
ATTENDANCE	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	Not stated
BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually (Principal to determine)
CAREERS – PROVIDER ACCESS STATEMENT (YEAR 7 TO 13)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually
CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE (ADAPTED FROM TRUST TEMPLATE)	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	Annually
CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING (ADAPTED FROM TRUST TEMPLATE)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Annually
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (ADAPTED FROM TRUST TEMPLATE)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually

Academy Policies Contd...

POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD STATED BY DFE (SEPT '19)
<p>CURRICULUM HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES – FOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>DT including food tech (localise and adopt model policy CLEAPPS L260) – Middle and Upper only</i> • <i>Science (localise and adopt model policy CLEAPPS DL223)</i> • <i>Art</i> <p><i>PE (this can be a handbook rather than policy)</i></p>	SCHOOL	<p>RECOMMENDED</p> <p>UNDER HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974, MAANGEMENT OF HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999 AND INDUSTRY GUIDANCE</p>	Not stated
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICIES	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Varies
<p>EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT</p> <p>(FOR PUBLICATION) – <i>POLICY PUBLISHED BY TRUST</i></p>	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	<p>Equality information must be updated and published at least every year.</p> <p>Equality objectives must be updated and published at least every 4 years</p>
FIRE POLICY / FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN	SCHOOL	<p>RECOMMENDED</p> <p>UNDER REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY)– ORDER 2005</p>	Not stated
LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE/POLICY	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	Recommended annually
LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually
SCHOOL EXCLUSION	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually
SCHOOL UNIFORM	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Not stated
SEX & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	<p>Annually</p> <p>(SEN Info Report should also be updated annually)</p>
<p>SUPPORTING PUPILS/STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS (<i>including first aid and children with health needs who cannot attend school</i>)</p>	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually

Statutory Documents

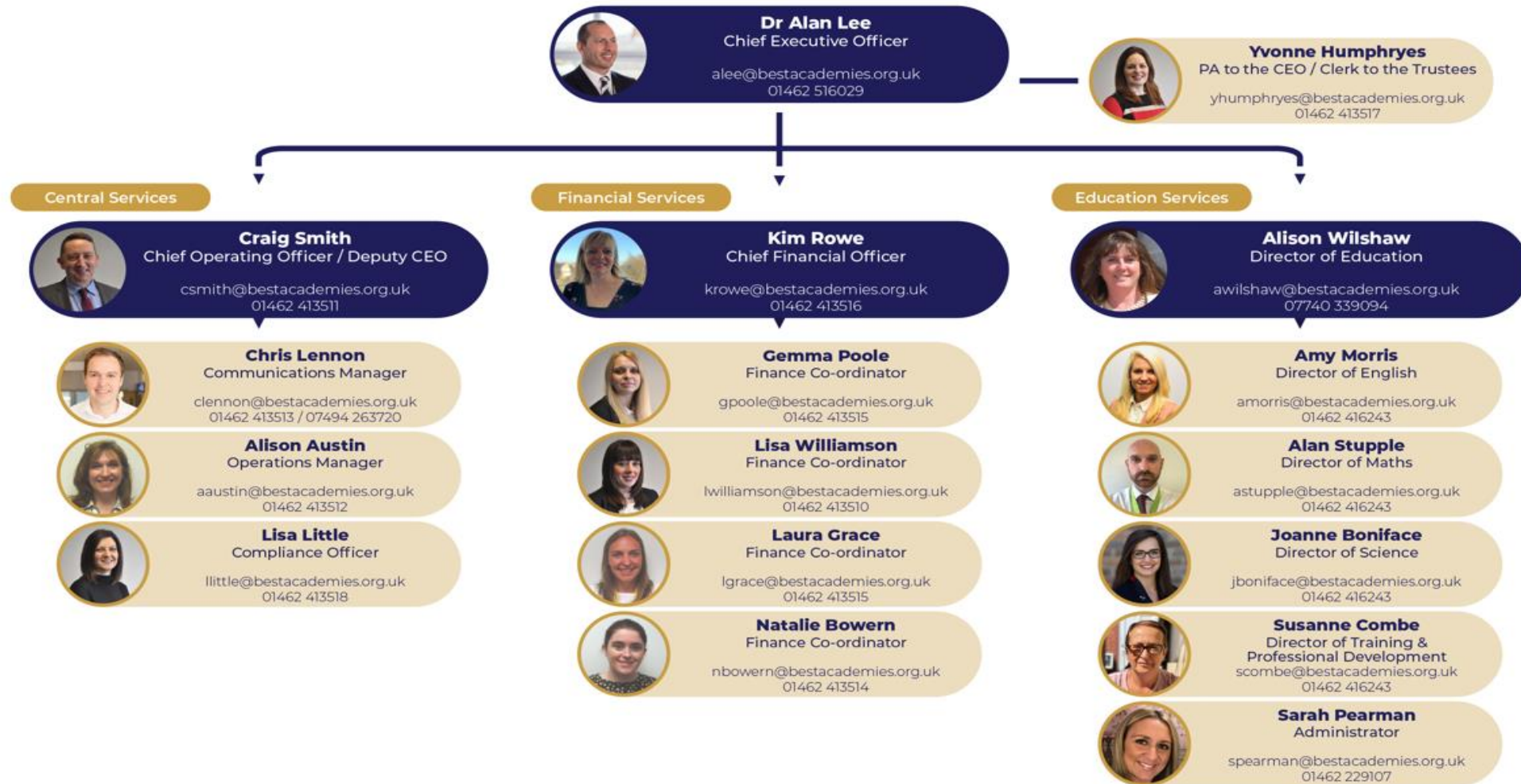
TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	3 yearly
CENTRAL RECORD OF RECRUITMENT AND VETTING CHECKS	SCHOOL / TRUST	MANDATORY	Live document
GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK / SCHEME OF DELEGATION	TRUST	MANDATORY	Annually
KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION	SCHOOL	STATUTORY GUIDANCE DOCUMENT	
MINUTES OF, AND PAPERS CONSIDERED AT, MEETINGS OF GOVERNING BODY AND ITS COMMITTEES	SCHOOL / TRUST	MANDATORY	Ongoing
PREMISES MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended annually (varies depending on document)
REGISTER OF BUSINESS & PECUNIARY INTERESTS	SCHOOL / TRUST	MANDATORY	Recommended annually
REGISTER OF PUPILS' ADMISSION TO SCHOOL	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Live document
REGISTER OF PUPILS' ATTENDANCE	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Live document
SCHOOL INFORMATION PUBLISHED ON A WEBSITE	SCHOOL / TRUST	MANDATORY	Live document
WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN	SCHOOL	STATUTORY GUIDANCE DOCUMENT	

Appendix 5: BEST Quality Assurance Calendar 2023/24

BEST Support			Timeline 2023-24												
Function	Lead	Detail	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	
Strategy	AL	Strategic Objectives and Plans	Implementation						Review			Trustees approve		Issue	
		Scheme of Delegation	Implementation						Review			Trustees approve		Issue	
		School Provision Maps	1st of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals				2nd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals			3rd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals		
		Principal meetings													
Governance	CS	LGB Review Meetings													
		Chairs Forum			Meeting				Meeting				Meeting		
		Governance Training	Training commences					Review					Audit		
Leadership Succession Planning	AL	Principal appointment, support, appraisal & CPD	Interviews CPD - Annual offer					Mid-year reviews							
	CS	LGB Chair Support, review and CPD		Governor Conference											
	AW	Leadership Qualifications: NPQML/ NPQSL/ NPQH1/NPQEL2	Annual Offer												
Compliance	CS/LL	Admissions	Trustees approve draft policy (Sept '25)		Policy Consultation (if required)		Trustees approve final policy	Submit policy to LA					Review Sept '26 policy		
		BEST Wide Policies (<i>these policies may be reviewed in advance of these dates and go forward to the next Trustees meeting</i>)	Child-on-child abuse / managing allegations of abuse against staff / safeguarding		Complaints (Trust) / reserves		Equality / whistleblowing		H&S / charging & remission / cyber security / grievance		Redundancy	Travel & subs / staff coc / pay / sickness absence / data protection / ECT / flexible working			
		GDPR audits	DPL audit/ COO Interim report to Trustees	Principal Check			DPL audit / Trust audits	Principal check	COO report to Trustees			DPL audit	Principal check		
		GDPR link governor	Link governor visit				Link governor visit				Link governor visit				
		Equality & Diversity	Principal report to LGB & send copy to COO				COO report to Trustees								
		Equality & Diversity link governor	Link governor visit				Link governor visit				Link governor visit				
		Trust Website Audits	Website audit 1 of 2						Website audit 2 of 2						
		Important Policy Acknowledgements (completed via SmartLog for staff or Governor Hub for governors)													
		Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests (completed via Google form for staff or Governor Hub for governors)													
Safeguarding	AW/CS/LL	Staff Training													
		Link gov visit (each term)	Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)				Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)				Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)				
		School audits and action plans							Safeguarding audits			Report to Trustees			
		Principal SCR check													

Health & Safety	CS / AA	Audits (Principals)	Consolidated report to Trustees		To LGBs on completion	Consolidated report to Trustees		To LGBs on completion	Consolidated report to Trustees	To LGBs on completion					
		PPM Compliance - via SmartLog	Annual Offer												
		Trust audit					Audit carried out by Cousins Safety and reports published for review								
Finance	KR	BEST annual financial process	Year end procedures/preparation of final accounts				Final accounts approved by Trustees		Budget Building			Draft budgets finalised and consolidated	Consolidated budget to Trustees for approval		
		Consistent financial reporting (CFRs)	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	
		External audits	End of year audit							Internal Scrutiny	Teachers' Pension Audit		End of year Audit		
		Statutory returns - ESFA, HMRC, TP, Companies House	VAT return Q4 and payment Practices Report			Financial Statements to ESFA and VAT return Q1	Annual Accounts return to ESFA. Financial Statements to Companies House	Payment Practices Report	VAT Return Q2		Budget Forecast Return: Outturn to ESFA and End of Year Certificate to TP	VAT Return Q3	Budget Forecast Return to ESFA	Corporation Tax Return	
		Support, advice, training and cover													
School Improvement / Standards	AW	BEST target setting and monitoring	Post LGB and Appraisal					Data overview - pre Performance Committee				Data overview - pre Performance Committee			
		External reports	Chris Beeden - annual outcomes Trust summary	External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee				External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee				External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee			
		School SEF	Completed by October Half-term					Updated by February Half-term					Review by End of June		
		School SIP	Completed by October Half-term					Updated by February Half-term					Review by End of June		
		Finance-led Curriculum Model													
		School Staffing Structure													
		School Improvement Provision Maps (see Strategy section)	1st of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals			2nd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals		3rd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals				
		Stakeholder surveys	Settling in year groups					Wellbeing (by Feb Half-term)			T&L focus (by May Half-term)				
		BEST SI Team CPD Offer	Annual Offer (reviewable on Academy needs)												
School Estates	CS/ AA	Review of Summer works					Prepare SCA/ Conditions Survey plans		Govt funding confirmed	Development of new plans and tendering	Report to Trustees	Summer Capital works			
HR	CS / AA	Advice	Annual Offer												
		Case Study Work	Annual Offer												
Information Technology	CS / AA		Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting		
Comms	CS/ CL	Ongoing support for schools including training													
		Two tier newsletters	Termly newsletter				Termly newsletter				Termly newsletter				

CENTRAL TEAM STRUCTURE CHART



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM




Dr Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer

National Leader of Education



Alison Wilshaw
Director of Education

National Leader of Education



Craig Smith
Chief Operations Officer

Fellow, Institute of School Business Leadership



Amy Morris
Director of English



Alan Stuppel
Director of Maths



Joanne Boniface
Director of Science



Susanne Combe
Director of Training & Professional Development

Lead Practitioners



Emily Adams
Science



Katie Bridge
Teaching, Learning & Development



Lucy Blackford
EYFS



Natasha Cooper
PE & Wellbeing



Michael Craddock
Attendance & Behaviour



Milli Evanson
English & Science



Rob Graves
Science



Jimmy Hart
PE



Jason Hatchell
Geography



Julia Haynes
History



Prof Lee Hubbard
HPA



Lisa Oestreicher
MFL



Suze Prendergast
Geography KS2



Tom Rowell
SEND



Alison Sugden
Wellbeing



Julie Undrell
Maths



Mike Ward
RE



Vishalie Yadav
Equality & Diversity

SLEs

Joya Brachmachari-Limb – Performing Arts and T&L
 Sarah Hughes – Maths KS1/2/3
 Vicky Lake – Humanities
 Christian Langley – Science KS2/3/4/5
 Douglas Leonard – Maths
 Alan Lovesey – Geography
 Kate Mackenzie – Phonics/Maths KS1
 Alex Mason – English KS3/4/5

Lynn Minshull – Maths KS1/2/3
 Juliet Parker – Maths KS1/2/3
 Hannah Potter – Geography and T&L
 Richard Scoot – Behaviour & Attendance
 Justin Togher – Maths KS3/4/5
 Emily Wrigglesworth – English

Appendix 8: Cause for Concern

A BEST Cause for Concern notice may be issued by the CEO in any of the six circumstances below:

In which an academy:

- fail to faithfully uphold the vision, values and ethos of BEST
- possesses an Ofsted requires improvement grade or an EFSA notice to improve
- the BEST COO, DofE or CFO identifies the academy as a high-risk academy
- pupil outcomes fall significantly below expectation, as determined by the BEST DofE
- fails to provide monitoring reports and/or fails to stay within agreed expenditure limits
- is not compliant with regard to its statutory obligations

In such a circumstance, delegated authority may be removed from either/both the Principal/LGB and corrective action will be taken, based on the identified concerns. This action may include consideration by the Board of either/both the Principal/LGB tenure.

Document / information for publication	Website	Comment
<p>Annual reports and accounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report • Annual audited accounts for last 2 years (publish by 31st Jan) • Memorandum of association • Articles of association • Names of charity trustees and members • Funding agreement 	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
<p><u>Publication of executive pay</u> The Trust must publish how many employees have a gross annual salary and benefits of £100,000 or more. This should be published in £10,000 increments (see para 2.32 of Academies Financial Handbook).</p>	Trust	Academies must have a link to the BEST website where this will be published.
The school's name, address and telephone number	Academy	
The name of the Principal	Academy	
<p>The address and telephone number of the Multi-Academy Trust's registered office <i>Including trading disclosure: the registered name of the Academy Trusts; the part of the UK where it is registered (e.g. "England and Wales"); the registered address of the Academy Trust; the fact that it is a charitable limited company; and the registered company number.</i></p>	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website.
A statement of the school's values and ethos	Academy	
The name and address for correspondence for the Chair of Governors	Academy	
Relevant business and pecuniary interests of trustees, local governors and members	Trust & Academy	
Publish up to date details of governance arrangements in a readily accessible format (see full list of requirements in Academies Financial Handbook)	Trust (Academy link)	All academies must include a clear link to the Governance Handbook / Scheme of Delegation on the BEST website.
The names of the members of the Multi-Academy Trust	Trust (Academy link)	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
The names of the governors on the local governing body and their remit/committees (<i>can be published in a Governance Handbook – a clear link to document and what information can be found must be provided</i>)	Academy	
<p>The structure and remit of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members • The board of trustees • Committees • LGBs <p>Including full names of the chair of each</p>	Trust (Academy link)	All academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.

<p>Members of the Trust – for each member who has served at any point over the past 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name • Date of appointment • Who appointed them • Date he/she stepped down (if applicable) 	Trust (Academy link)	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
<p>Trustees and LGBs – for each trustee and local governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name • Date of appointment • Who appointed them • Term of office • Date he/she stepped down (if applicable) 	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where the information re Trustees can be found.
<p><u>Attendance records (trustees and LGBs)</u></p> <p>For trustees – attendance records at board and committee meetings over the last academic year.</p> <p>For local governors – attendance records at local governing body meetings over the last academic year.</p>	Trust & Academy	
<p><u>Admissions Arrangements</u></p> <p>Academy trusts must publish the admissions arrangements for their schools on their website and keep them there for the whole of the offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).</p> <p>16 to 19 academies and colleges - <u>recommended</u> that details of admission arrangements are published.</p> <p>Information should be published a year before the beginning of the academic year to help parents and students make an informed choice, and it is recommended that the arrangements don't change during the year. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open days planned • the process for applying for a place • whether the academy gives priority to applications from pupils enrolled at particular schools 	Trust & Academy	
<p><u>Admissions consultations</u> – during any consultation on changes to proposed admission arrangements, the following must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the full proposed admission arrangements including the proposed published admission number (PAN) • Details of the person to whom comments may be sent • The areas on which comments are not sought • Reference to the PAN being higher than in previous years (where applicable) 	Trust & Academy	

<p><u>Equality Information</u></p> <p>As public bodies, academies and further education institutions must comply with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish details of how the school complies with the public sector equality duty - updated every year • publish the school's equality objectives - updated at least once every 4 years <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminating discrimination (see the Equality Act 2010) • advancing equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it • consulting and involving those affected by inequality in the decisions the school takes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (affected people could include parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community) 	Trust & Academy	Trust will produce a diversity and gender pay gap report, and publish this on the BEST website – all academies to provide a clear link to this information on their website.
Gender pay gap report	Trust (Academy link)	All academies to provide a clear link to the BEST website.
Name and contact details of SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO)	Academy	
Particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language	Academy	
<p><u>SEN information report</u></p> <p>Schools must publish an Information Report on their website about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN and should update it annually.</p> <p>They should update any changes occurring during the year as soon as possible. The report must comply with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014, meaning that it must contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the 'SEN Information' specified in Schedule 1 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. (Statutory guidance on this is contained in section 6.79 to 6.82 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years); • information as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils 	Academy	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the steps you have taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils ○ the facilities you provide to help disabled pupils to access the school ○ the plan prepared under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school’s curriculum ▪ improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school ▪ improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled 		
<p><u>Pupil premium strategy</u></p> <p>Schools may wish to plan their pupil premium use over 3 years. They should aim to update the online strategy statement <u>by the end of the autumn term each year</u> to reflect their plans for the academic year after assessing the needs of the pupils, both new and existing.</p> <p>For the current academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school’s pupil premium grant allocation amount • a summary of the main barriers to educational achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school • how the school will spend the pupil premium to overcome those barriers and the reasons for that approach • how the school will measure the effect of the pupil premium • the date of the next review of the school’s pupil premium strategy <p>For the previous academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the school spent the pupil premium funding • the effect of the expenditure on pupils <p><i>DfE templates available for use</i></p>	Academy	
<p>Catch up premium reports (in line with current guidance)</p>	Academy	
<p><u>PE and sport premium for primary schools</u></p> <p>Schools must publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount of premium received • a full breakdown of how it has been spent 	Academy	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact of the school has seen on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment how the improvements will be sustainable in the future the percentage of pupils within year 6 cohort that can do each of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25m use a range of strokes effectively perform safe self-rescue in different water based situations 		
<p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <p>Academies should publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the content of the curriculum the school follows in each academic year for every subject, including for mandatory subjects such as Religious Education even if it's taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else the approach to the curriculum including how they are complying with their duties in the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Regulations 2014. how parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum the school is following how the school meet the 16 to 19 study programme requirements (if the school have a sixth form or offer education at 16 to 19) <p>Depending on what phase of education the school offers, it is recommended that the school also publish any of the following that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the names of any phonics or reading schemes the school are using in key stage 1 a list of the courses available to pupils at key stage 4, including GCSEs the 16 to 19 qualifications the school offer <p>INCLUDE THE 3 I'S.</p>	Academy	
<p><u>Remote Education</u></p> <p>Publish information about your school's remote education provision on your website. An optional template is available to support schools with this requirement.</p>	Academy	
<p>Ofsted reports – publish either a copy of the most recent Ofsted report or a link to the report on the Ofsted website.</p>	Academy	
<p>Academies must publish a link to the school and college performance tables and the academy's performance tables page.</p>	Academy	

<p><u>Key stage 2 (KS2)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress scores in reading, writing and maths • Percentage of pupils who achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing and maths • Percentage of pupils who achieved at a higher standard in reading, writing and maths • Average scaled scores in reading and maths 	Academy	<p>You do not need to publish your KS2 results for the academic year 2021 to 2022 on your website, as the Secretary of State will not publish this data.</p> <p>You should continue to display your school's most recent KS2 performance measures, as published by the Secretary of State. For most schools, these will be the performance measures published for the 2018 to 2019 academic year.</p> <p>You should clearly mark that these performance measures are for the academic year 2018 to 2019, and are not current. Example statement to add:</p> <p><i>"The government will not publish KS2 school level data for the 2021 to 2022 academic year. The last available public data is from the 2018 to 2019 academic year. It is important to note that the data from that year may no longer reflect current performance."</i></p>
<p><u>Key stage 4 (KS4)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress 8 score • Percentage of pupils entering EBacc • Pupil destinations – percentage of students staying in education or employment after KS4 • Attainment in English and maths – percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in GCSE English and Maths • Attainment 8 score 	Academy	<p>You should publish the details listed from your school's most recent KS4 performance measures, as published by the Secretary of State. For most schools, these will be the performance measures for the 2021 to 2022 academic year.</p>
<p><u>Key stage 5 (KS5)</u></p> <p>Sixth forms should publish the following details from their 16-18 performance tables – schools most recent KS5 performance measures as published by the Secretary of State.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment • Retention • Destinations 	Academy	<p>Schools should publish the most recent 16 to 18 performance measures, as published by the Secretary of State. For most schools, these will be the performance measures for the 2021 to 2022 academic year.</p> <p>Progress performance measures – you do not need to display progress measures (level 3 value added), or English and mathematics progress measure, on your website. These measures will not be published for the 2021 to 2022 academic year.</p>
<p><u>Careers programme information</u></p> <p>Academies, free schools and colleges should publish information about the school's careers programme. This information should relate to the delivery of careers guidance to year 7 to 13 pupils (11 to 18 year olds) and any requirement set out in the funding agreement to deliver careers guidance. For the current academic year include:</p>	Academy	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the name, email address and telephone number of the school's Careers Leader a summary of the careers programme, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access information about the careers programme how the school measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on pupils the date of the school's next review of the information published <p>Reference to use of Gatsby Charitable Foundations Benchmarks</p>		
<p>Statutory policies for publication on website:</p> <p>Acceptable Use Policy (or e-safety policy – <i>referenced in safeguarding policy</i>)</p> <p>Accessibility plan</p> <p>Admissions policy including appeals timetable (BEST)</p> <p>Attendance policy</p> <p>Behaviour policy – <i>including remote education considerations if still applicable</i></p> <p>Exclusion policy</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Provider access statement – careers (year 7 to 13 pupils only)</p> <p>Charging & remission policy (BEST)</p> <p>Child protection/safeguarding (using BEST template) – <i>including remote education considerations if still applicable</i></p> <p>Child on child abuse</p> <p>Complaints procedure</p> <p>Early years foundation stage policies (if applicable)</p> <p>Equality policy / objectives</p> <p>Freedom of information policy (BEST)</p> <p>Data Protection (GDPR) & Privacy Notices (BEST)</p> <p>Health & Safety (BEST)</p> <p>Looked after & previously looked after children</p> <p>Sex & relationship education policy</p> <p>Special education needs policy</p> <p>Supporting pupils/students with medical needs (<i>including first aid and children who cannot attend school</i>)</p> <p>Whistleblowing (BEST)</p>	<p>Academy (Trust for BEST policies)</p>	<p>All academies must provide a list of BEST published policies on their website together with a link to the BEST website policy page.</p>
<p>Publication scheme (a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000)</p>	<p>Trust (academy link)</p>	<p>Academies must provide a link to the BEST website.</p>
<p>School uniform</p> <p>The published uniform policy should be easy to understand and, where a school has a school uniform, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly state whether an item is optional or required 	<p>Academy</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make clear if the item will only be worn at certain times of the year (for example, if it's summer or winter uniform) • make clear whether a generic item will be accepted or if a branded item is required • make clear whether an item can only be purchased from a specific retailer or if it can be purchased more widely, including from second-hand retailers 		
<p>School opening hours</p> <p>Schools should publish on their website their opening and closing times and the total time this amounts to in a typical week (for example 32.5 hours).</p> <p>Schools should show the compulsory times they are open. This time runs from the official start of the school day (morning registration) to the official end of the compulsory school day. It includes breaks, but not optional before or after school activities.</p>	Academy	
Cookie policy to provide internet users with clear and comprehensive information about the purposes for which the cookie is stored and accessed.	Trust & Academy	
Request for copies – state that paper copies of any information on the website can be provided if necessary.	Trust & Academy	
Name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public	Trust & Academy	
Parent View link	Academy	

NB. Websites must comply with data protection law if using photographs of individuals or data taken from members of the public. Websites must also observe intellectual property rights if publishing content produced by third parties.

Only statutory information required to be published on an academy website is checked in this audit, other areas of the website are not checked. The Trust will audit academy websites twice yearly. The academy is responsible for ensuring the compliance of the website between audits.

Please note that the contents of reports and policies are not checked during the website audits – just that the report/policy has been published and reviewed within the statutory time scales.

Appendix 10: BEST Governors' Code of Conduct

As individuals on the Governing Body for each academy we agree to the following and we/will:

- champion the vision, values and ethos of BEST
- adhere to the Seven Principles of Public, established by the Nolan Committee (see appendix 20)
- actively support and challenge the Principals¹⁵
- accept collective responsibility for all our decisions; observing complete confidentiality as appropriate
- have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer
- consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other academies, declaring any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise
- take part in an annual review of LGB effectiveness, complete a Governor Self Audit form, attendance at the BEST Governance Annual Conference and complete a minimum of one specific training course in line with the BEST Governance Skills audit
- attend at least (2/3) of meetings per year, or in the case of LGBs that meet more than 3 times, achieve at least 75% attendance. In the event an individual governor's attendance falls below this, their ability to effectively discharge their duties as a governor will be reviewed with them by the Chair of the Local Governing Body
- aim to remain current with the national agenda on education, including reading relevant update literature issued by BEST and/or DFE
- record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time
- act in the best interests of the academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body
- if we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate
- seek further support where necessary from the BEST's Governor Advice line accessed via the CEO, Dr Alan Lee, alee@bestacademies.org.uk or 07984 404578 (for Members and Trustees) or Craig Smith, csmith@bestacademies.org.uk or 07429 206091 (for LGB members).

¹⁵ Should the CEO decide that a cause for concern category is to be given to a particular academy, the LGB will work openly and positively with the school improvement/finance to secure rapid correction.

Appendix 11: BEST Chairs' Forum – Terms of Reference

Core Aim:

To ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables all pupils and staff in our community to excel.

Overall Purpose and Responsibility:

- To provide the opportunity for LGB members from different academies and Board members to meet
- To facilitate good communications between LGBs and the Board of Trustees
- To offer a discussion forum for challenges to and management of LGBs.

Composition:

- The Board Chair will invite the Chairs – or their nominated representatives - of each LGB
- Board members have an open invitation to attend
- Members of the BEST Executive Team and external advisors will be invited by the Board Chair as deemed appropriate.

Proceedings:

- The forum will meet virtually once a term, usually for 1.5 hours
- Agenda items/papers will be distributed 5 working days in advance of any meetings. One item will be a sharing of best practice by an LGB Chair
- The meeting will be minuted by the Governance Professional to the Board
- The CEO will report back to the Board on the meeting, attendance and general discussion themes/recommendations for action.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context:

Local governing bodies (LGBs) are at the heart of BEST. LGBs are appointed by and report to the Board (which is the legal entity responsible for governance within the Trust). They provide effective day-to-day oversight of BEST academies - by following the LGB Core Functions and LGB Key Responsibilities outlined below and the Scheme of Delegation at Appendix 1 in this document.

LGBs lead on promoting BEST in the community and are responsible for championing BEST's mission, vision and values.

LGB Core functions:

The core functions of the LGB are:

- Ensuring the mission, vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld and clearly communicated, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables students and staff to excel.
- Holding the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which the minimum expectation for all students of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20% is strictly followed.
- Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value.

LGB Key responsibilities:

Vision, ethos and strategic direction (community engagement focus):

(Executive Support – Chief Operations Officer, Craig Smith)

- Champion BEST's mission, vision and values throughout the academy and wider community, nurturing a culture of consistent high expectations from all.
- Support, monitor and challenge the Principal against targets set by BEST for the academy. Chair to support with the appointment/appraisal of the academy Principal.
- Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.

Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the academy and its students:

(Executive Support – Director of Education, Alison Wilshaw)

- Involvement in the construction/approval of both the Academy Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation documents
- Ensuring that curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the academy, facilitated by an appropriate staff CPD programme
- Monitoring the performance of the academy with particular respect to the progress and attainment of individuals and groups (including the most disadvantaged and SEND), pupil well-being and staff appraisal
- Ensuring compliance with BEST Safeguarding and HR policies, promoting well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and students
- Monitoring all external reports, ensuring impactful Academy Action Plans are in place

Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent:

(Executive Support – Chief Finance Officer, Kim Rowe)

- Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value, ensuring:
 - robust curriculum-led financial planning
 - effective costed staffing
 - adequate contingency and reserves – a minimum of 5% GAG funding - are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning
 - communication to Board of Trustees when there are concerns relating to the academy's financial position
- Ensuring appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium and sports funding
- Maintaining a register of business and personal interests.

Composition and nomination of the Chair

BEST wishes the LGB to usually contain a maximum of 8 members:

- Two Parent LGB members
- The Principal
- One staff LGB member
- A minimum of one and up to four LGB members with a particular expertise, as identified the BEST Skills Audit.¹⁶

Appointments

The appointment of LGB members will be overseen by the COO and will require the approval of the Board.

Staff and parent members – nominations will be sought from staff and parents for those willing to serve as a member of the LGB. Elections will be held if more nominations are received than the number of vacancies.

LGB members will nominate and select their Chair for each academic year, from 1 September to 31 August for approval by the Board. The selection should take place at the last meeting of the Summer term in the preceding year or at the first meeting of the Autumn term for the current year. The Board Chair and BEST Governance Professional are to be notified within seven days of selection. Where there is more than one nomination for the role of Chair a secret ballot will be arranged by the minute taker, with guidance from the COO where required. The Chair should not be a staff member of the academy.

All LGB members are expected to visit the academy at pre-arranged times to take part in an agreed programme of monitoring activities and support with various academy events. Members will also be required to complete the annual skills audit and attend the Annual Governance Conference and identified Governance training opportunities.

The BEST Governance Professional will maintain a list of all Chairs, LGB members and their terms of office. The LGB Governance Professional is responsible for providing the BEST Governance Professional with termly updates.

Proceedings

(Executive Support, BEST Governance Professional -Yvonne Humphryes)

- The LGB shall meet at least six times a year.
Dates – including times and venues - for meetings will be published at the start of each year
- 51% of the membership – to include a minimum of one who is not a parent or staff member – is required for a meeting to be quorate
- Agendas will be agreed between the Chair and the Principal and will be published at least a week in advance of each meeting. Standing items shall include:
 - apologies for absence
 - declarations of interest
 - matters arising: safeguarding and GDPR updates
 - community engagement
 - educational performance
 - financial performance
- Minutes will be taken to record the proceedings and decisions of all meetings of the Committee, including recording names of those present and in attendance and, apologies and explanation for those not able to attend. Minutes will be stored on GovernorHub and be monitored by the COO/BEST Governance Professional
- LGB Chairs will provide reports and updates to the Board as required, but with a minimum annual report.
- LGB Chairs will meet with the COO for an annual review of effectiveness in the summer term

¹⁶ This maximum number may be flexed, through consultation with the COO to ensure the LGB possesses all the prerequisite skills.

Terms of Office

- Staff members will be appointed for a three year period
- Parent members will be appointed for a three year period
- Other members will be appointed for a three year period, subject to evaluation by the LGB and Board
- No member shall serve for longer than nine years unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Evidence sources

BEST Governance Handbook

Performance Committee Reports

SIP and SEF documents

Finance and Audit Reports

Principal Academy Reports

Policies

Appendix 13: Local Governing Bodies: Community Engagement

Local Governing Bodies should ensure effective engagement with stakeholders, as understanding the views and experiences of stakeholders is a crucial part of the governance role, rather than just relying on the reports of the Senior Leaders within the school. If governors really want to get to know their schools, it is vital that they listen to a range of voices. The governors, working with the principal, must decide which key indicators they wish to monitor and plan for the process to take place.

The principal and the staff should have trust and confidence in the governors' integrity to act in the best interests of the whole school with the pupils at its heart. Trust and confidence are developed when the governors share responsibility for the work of the school, both good and bad, and take decisions that will lead to improvement in the quality of the school's education provision and pupil performance.

The Governors might join in a subject or curriculum review where they listen to the voice of pupils. They might attend a Parents' Evening and speak with parents. However, the most frequently used method of stakeholder engagement is by conducting a survey, which is both quick and meaningful to what you are trying to find out. Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) require that all Local Governing Bodies complete stakeholder surveys throughout each academic year, as stated in the Terms of Reference (Appendix 12), under Key responsibilities - Vision, ethos and strategic direction (community engagement focus). Bullet 3 states: **Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.**

The stakeholders (parents, pupils and staff), should each, individually, be surveyed at least once, annually. Therefore, the minimum of three surveys in total would be carried out. The suggestion would be therefore that one a term fits this structure quite naturally.

A quick consideration guide is shown below:

- What area will we examine?
- Which stakeholder are we targeting?
- Who will collect the evidence?
- How and when will it be collected?
- How and when will it be presented to all governors?
- What evidence will demonstrate success?
- How will actions be planned, should there need to be any, after the survey?

There are many templates of questions available across the Trust and beyond to help you to carry out these surveys. Please do ask either your Principal or the Director of Education should you need a sample to guide you.

Appendix 14: Local Governing Bodies: Safeguarding Link Governor Role

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that the school is implementing the appropriate policies, including the following:
 - Child protection/safeguarding - Trust template
 - Staff code of conduct
 - Allegations of abuse against staff
 - Safeguarding policy – Trust template
 - Child-on-child abuse policy – Trust template
 - DSL supervision policy
 - Children looked after policy
 - Acceptable use/e-safety policy
- Monitor the school's safeguarding systems and procedures
- Ensure the school has appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education
- Ensure the school has appropriate online filters and monitoring systems in place and that the DSL takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place as part of their role
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Make sure the DSL has sufficient time, resources and training to carry out their role effectively
- Make sure the DSL is receiving adequate support in terms of their wellbeing
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated (named) teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, and that this person has appropriate training
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated (named) teacher to promote the mental health and wellbeing of the children
- Ensure the curriculum covers safeguarding, including topics such as online safety, consent etc
- Keep up to date with statutory guidance relating to safeguarding and child protection and any advice issued by the relevant safeguarding partners
- Update the governing board on how the monitoring is going
- Make sure that checks to the single central record (SCR) are happening – to be carried out once per term as per the quality assurance calendar
- Meet regularly with the DSL to monitor that the school's policy and procedures are effective and all staff and governors have had the appropriate level of training (as applicable) - staff safeguarding training must include understanding their role and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring
- Attend training for safeguarding link governors
- Encourage other members of the board/governing body to develop their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities
- Have an awareness of the LADO referrals (anonymised) and understand the process followed when concerns regarding staff are raised
- Participate in the annual safeguarding audit
- **Not** deal with specific safeguarding incidents, but will have an awareness of safeguarding incidents (anonymised)
- **Not** access contents of staff personnel files – governors can seek assurance of checks/processes by reviewing the recruitment checklist
- **Not** produce a safeguarding report to the board as this is done by the Principal or DSL

Safeguarding Link Governors must carry out a link governor visit each term as per the quality assurance calendar.

Appendix 15: LGB Activity Schedule

	Agenda Items ¹⁷	LGB to do list	Report to receive/for information
Autumn Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review skills audits/identify training needs ◦ Review terms of office/succession planning ◦ Primary only: PE & Sports Premium Review ◦ Review School Policies due¹⁸ ◦ Agree termly schedule of LGB school visits ◦ Review/discuss the schools finances ◦ Termly update/review of the following:¹⁹ Outcomes/predictions; behaviour & SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Confirm declarations on GovHub²⁰ ◦ Complete BEST Safeguarding training ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes²¹ ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB support) ◦ Statement of Provision review/sign (CoG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ New edition BGHB & Scheme of delegation ◦ Annual Governance Conference – 14 Oct 23 ◦ SOAP produced for Performance Comm ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report)
Autumn Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review/discuss school policies due review ◦ Review/discuss the schools finances ◦ Principal to present/discuss findings of progress against Equality objectives ◦ Principal to present/discuss findings of the previous years' Pupil Premium Review²² ◦ Principal to share stakeholder survey results ◦ Review/discuss Link Governor Reports: SEN and Safeguarding (Safeguarding to incl. SCR compliance check)²³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB support) ◦ Link Governors to conduct reviews ◦ H&S Report (Principal with LGB Support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Equality progress review info uploaded to website ◦ Pupil Premium Report uploaded to website ◦ SEND Info Report uploaded to website ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report) ◦ Receive Link Governor Reports ◦ Stakeholder survey results: Settling in Year Groups – Pupils ◦ Teaching Staff Appraisals & Pay Review
Spring Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review/discuss school policies due review ◦ Principal to present school finances/reserves ◦ Agree termly schedule of LGB school visits ◦ Termly update/review of the following: Outcomes/predictions; behaviour & SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB support) ◦ Statement of Provision review/sign (CoG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DPL to supply trust with school GDPR audit ◦ Centrally commissioned H&S Audit/Report ◦ SOAP produced for Performance Comm ◦ BEST CFO provides Principal with their schools' reserve position ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report) ◦ Half-yearly school website audit completed

¹⁷ This document contains the minimum required in addition to: Declarations of interest, approval of previous minutes and the Principal's usual items covered within their report.

¹⁸ Review School Policies due that half term in line with the school's policy review cycle; see BGHB, appendix 4, for BEST Mandatory school based policies and their review frequency.

¹⁹ Items highlighted in gold can be completed either the first or second half of each term.

²⁰ BEST Central will update declarations over the summer in readiness for September of the new academic year.

²¹ Please complete the Governor onboarding/off-boarding pro-forma for any new/departed Governors and share with BEST Central (Yvonne and Lisa)

²² The Pupil Premium review should include spending, impact and the plans for this academic year.

²³ Link Governors are to assure themselves the Principal is carrying out sufficient checks – how Governors are assured is at the LGB's discretion.

Spring Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review/discuss school policies due review ◦ Review/discuss the schools finances ◦ Principal to share stakeholder survey results ◦ Review/discuss Link Governor Reports: SEN and Safeguarding (Safeguarding to incl. SCR compliance check) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ BGHB Consultation – feedback welcome ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB support) ◦ Link Governors to conduct reviews ◦ H&S Report (Principal with LGB support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ COO to share Equality findings with Trustees ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report) ◦ Receive Link Governor Reports ◦ Stakeholder survey results: Wellbeing – Staff ◦ Support Staff Appraisals & Pay Review
Summer Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review/discuss school policies due review ◦ Principal to present school finances/budget ◦ Agree termly schedule of LGB school visits ◦ Termly update/review of the following: Outcomes/predictions; behaviour & SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Principal (with LGB support) to produce a budget/3 year forecast for CFO submission ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB Support) ◦ Statement of Provision review/sign (CoG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ SOAP produced for Performance Comm ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report)
Summer Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Matters Arising: H&S, GDPR & Safeguarding ◦ Review/discuss school policies due review ◦ Review/discuss the school's Finances ◦ Agree next Chair, Vice Chair & Link Governors ◦ Principal to share stakeholder survey results ◦ Annual review on the following: Exclusions; Attendance; Impact on Learning; Behaviour and Staff Attendance ◦ Review/discuss Link Governor Reports: SEN and Safeguarding (Safeguarding to incl. SCR compliance check) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ LGB effectiveness review with COO ◦ Complete Skills Audit (provided by BEST) ◦ Publish PE & Sports Premium Review ◦ Link Governors to conduct reviews ◦ H&S Report (Principal with LGB Support) ◦ CoG/GP to confirm Governance on GIAS ◦ Update BEST with LGB member changes ◦ SEF/SIP review (Principal with LGB Support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Principal to share CFR (Financial Report) ◦ Receive Link Governor Reports ◦ Half-yearly school website audit completed ◦ Principals to carry out an end of year review of progress against Equality objectives to present to LGB next term and publish ◦ Principal to carry out an end of year Pupil Premium review to present to LGB next term and publish to website by 31 July (Mandatory, as per DfE). ◦ Stakeholder survey results: Teaching & Learning – Parents/Carers

The following documents are available on the BEST website – click [here](#) to view:

- BEST Governance Handbook (BGHB) and Scheme of Delegation
- BEST Strategic Objectives and Action Plan
- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Annual Report on Facilities Time taken by Trade Union Officials
- BEST Annual Accounts
- BEST Legal & Governance Documentation

Document to be used in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Calendar (BGHB, Appendix 5), LGB Terms of Reference (BGHB, page 12) and the Scheme of Delegation (BGHB, Appendix 1)

Equality & Diversity Charter



At Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the Trust feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

BEST and its entities aim to meet its obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

LEADERSHIP	CULTURE	COMMUNICATION
<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate how well the setting is achieving the three aims of the general duty across all of the protected characteristics • Identify where there are gaps and prioritise these for action – identifying at least three measurable objectives to focus on over 4 years • Ensure the Equality Policy is implemented and monitored • Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development • Reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that exist • Ensure that equality is embedded within the curriculum 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See all learners as of equal value • Recognise and respect differences • Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belongings • Established Equality and Diversity working group • Mutual respect • Challenging incidents of prejudice including racism and homophobia 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult and involve the BEST community • Promote equality and diversity education amongst the BEST community • Ensure awareness of policies through robust communication processes

Care, Guidance and Wellbeing



Our core aims are to:

- Help staff maintain a healthy work/life balance and to feel happy and secure in the support that they receive from their own academy and BEST Trust as a whole
- Monitor workloads so that they are manageable, reviewing our calendar and practice often and so rationalising systems to become even more efficient and supportive

LEADERSHIP	CULTURE	COMMUNICATION
<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding health and wellbeing in to all aspects of the Trust • Funding Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Trainers, and then in turn, MHFA Champions in each Academy and Nursery • Updating ‘Leading a Mentally Healthy school’ training and rolling out to all Trust Leaders • Having a set of health, safety and wellbeing documents that provide employees with the tools to help themselves to improve their health and wellbeing • Consulting with Unions over relevant policies • Supporting staff through periods of illness • Actively encouraging employees to make positive lifestyle choices and signposting a range of interventions and support mechanisms to help prevent ill-health, stay in work or return to work as soon as possible • Robust Safeguarding. We have an array of middle and senior leaders trained as DSLs to respond to the contextual issues that any Academy might face. This group will meet regularly to act a support mechanism to each other • Offering a range of Mindfulness Programmes to all teaching and support staff in the Trust and Governance Team • Offering an Employee Assistance Programme to all staff 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to colleagues and supporting them with empathy and compassion • Building an open and transparent environment that will not tolerate bullying, racism or inequality • Recruiting leaders and Trustees who understand that teachers and support staff are our most valuable resource and who support and challenge positively • Staff feeling valued and included, by creating an effective and meaningful CPD offer • Growing our own talent through our Leadership Ladder • Checking that funds are spent appropriately and add full, positive impact • Promoting Charity and Community involvement and encouraging care beyond our own family of Academies • Employing a Compliance Officer to ensure that the Trust follows correct procedures • Update Safer Recruitment training regularly • Checking that GDPR measures are in place and fit for purpose • Being mindful of pressures external to school that cause anxiety/stress in staff (e.g. Ofsted) • Developing wellbeing gardens at each of our Academies over the next 2-4 years 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the means of communication meets the needs of all Trust stakeholders • Having BEST stress and wellbeing guidance available in each setting • Keeping colleagues and stakeholders regularly informed about relevant news and updates across a variety of communication channels • All stakeholders’ voices are actively sought when appropriate to do so, so that all feel included and involved • Holding regular, meaningful meetings with Executive Team and Trustees, that are well organised and documented correctly • Ensuring statutory policies are available via the Trust and Academy websites • LGBs regularly monitoring their Academy’s wellbeing activities

Appendix 18: BEST LGB SEND Guidance

We, at Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST), recognise that all staff and governors are responsible for the special educational needs and disabilities provision for all pupils/students in our care. The SEND Code of Practice does not specifically state what governors should be told about SEND, or stipulate any particular forms of reporting to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). However, the DfE Governance Handbook (October 2020) pinpoints aspects of practices that would raise standards and manage accountabilities well.

DfE Governance Handbook (SEND references)

- Paragraph 3.3 - outlines the role of Accountability for Educational Performance
- Paragraph 16 - draws attention to LGBs asking the right questions in order to improve pupil and staff performance with SEND pupils, and the importance of accessing robust and meaningful data
- Heading 6 (Compliance) – addresses SEND and Equality of opportunity
- 6.5.11/12 paragraphs 67-76 - covers children with special educational needs and disabilities, and the legal duties of the Academy and its Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

(Please refer to the Scheme of Delegation which outlines the accountability level for roles)

Trust

- Director of Education to provide strategic leadership for educational performance, standards and effectiveness across all BEST settings
- Director of Education to develop BEST-wide strategies and procedures for improving outcomes for all pupils/students in all BEST settings
- Director of Education to regularly meet with Principals to monitor actions/performance.

Local Governing Body

- Appoint a SEND link governor
- Ensure that the SEN information report is updated annually and published on the website – in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Review and interrogate the progress made against the last Key Stage data
- Support and challenge senior leaders to verify that pupil/student needs are identified and met effectively
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and money spent
- Check that the key responsibilities of the SENCo are comprehensively drawn up
- Be assured that the SENCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out their role successfully
- Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and pupils/students
- Discharge duties in respect of pupils/students with SEND

Principal

- Present SEND report to LGB – including sufficient information to allow the LGB to understand fully the pupil performance against National data and the pupil's own potential
- Create a culture of inclusion where well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance are championed
- Ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations to SEND, including setting budgets such that sufficient resources are available to be compliant
- Ensure a whole-school SEND strategy is in place
- Ensure that the SENCo has received statutory / adequate training, and has sufficient time and resources to carry out their role
- Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and pupils/students
- Discharge duties in respect of pupils/students with SEND.

SENCo

- Update the SEN information report annually and publish it on the website (in consultation with the LGB)
- Work with Local Authorities to ensure best outcomes for those with EHCPs
- Ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils/students
- Ensure statutory compliance in regards to SEND
- Ensure that a SEND policy is in place, complies with current legislation and is updated on an annual basis (for those schools whose SENCo is not part of the Senior Leadership Team, this would be in conjunction with their SLT link)
- Ensure that the SEND policy is implemented and embedded within the setting (in conjunction with SLT link if applicable)
- Ensure that an accessibility plan is in place and reviewed three yearly, and that the Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives are published and reviewed annually.
- Support the identification of pupils/students with SEND in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Co-ordinate provision for pupils/students with SEND in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Liaise with parents/carers of pupils/students with SEND
- Liaise with other providers, outside agencies, educational psychologists and external agencies
- Ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils/students with SEND up to date in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Work with the Principal to develop a whole-school SEND strategy
- Co-ordinate staff training as appropriate.

Whilst there is no stipulated format (or frequency of times), to follow where reports to Governors are concerned, a recommended template to report to governors on SEND pupils/students is available on Governor Hub on the resources page. This template may be adapted to suit the individual needs of each setting. This template may also be used as part of the SEND link governor visit.

Appendix 19: Governance and Ofsted

School Inspection Handbook

(Updated July 2022, effective from September 2022)

Governance forms part of the Leadership and Management judgement. This is about ‘how leaders, managers and those responsible for governance ensure that the education that the school provides has a positive impact on all its pupils’.

(Ofsted, 2022, para 313) Those involved with governance at BEST should be familiar with the School Inspection Handbook. Below is the section on Governance:

Paragraph	Ofsted School Inspection Handbook - September 2022
	Governance
320.	Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance.
321.	In a maintained school, those responsible for governance are the school governors. In a stand-alone academy, it is the trustees.
322.	In a MAT, the trustees are responsible for governance. Inspectors will ask to speak to one or more of the trustees. It may be that, on occasion, the trustees have chosen to delegate some of their powers to the members of the ‘academy committee’ or ‘local governing board’ at school level. If inspectors are informed that a local governing body has delegated responsibilities, they should establish clearly which powers are with the trustees, which are with the leaders of the MAT and which are with the local governing board. They should then ensure that both their inspection activities and the inspection report reflect this.
323.	All MATs should have, and publish, a scheme of delegation clearly setting out everything that has been delegated by the board of trustees to the local governing board or any other person or body. Advice on how this should work can be found in the DfE guidance ‘Multi-academy trusts: establishing and developing your trust’ .
324.	When inspecting academies that are part of a MAT, inspectors will need to bear in mind that governance functions can be quite different from those in a maintained school. Some functions that a governing body in a maintained school would carry out may be done by management or executive staff in a trust. If this is the case, it will still be important for inspectors to ascertain the trust board’s role in that process and how it ensures that these functions are carried out properly.
325.	The DfE’s governance handbook sets out the purpose of governance, which is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.
326.	The governance handbook also sets out the statutory functions of all boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern. There are 3 core functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction • holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff • overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent, including the pupil premium
327.	Inspectors will explore how governors carry out each of these functions. For example, the clarity of the school’s vision, ethos and strategic direction will have a significant impact on the decisions that leaders make about the curriculum. Inspectors will consider whether the work of governors in this respect is supporting the school to provide a high-quality education for its pupils.
328.	In addition, those with governance/oversight are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the ‘Prevent’ duty and safeguarding. Governors are also expected to exercise strategic oversight of all aspects of safeguarding. When inspectors consider whether governors are fulfilling this responsibility, they are not expected to construct or review a list of duties.

At inspection time, the **BEST Inspection protocol** should be clearly adhered to, please see Appendix 21.

Appendix 20: BEST – Ofsted Protocols for Principals and Nursery Managers

After receiving notification of an Ofsted Inspection, the following steps must be taken:

- Take the initial call, establishing if the visit is a Section 5 or Section 8 category
- After the initial call please contact CEO/YH at the earliest possible convenience to alert them to the visit. (Nurseries to call Director of Education)
- YH will alert Director of Education (DofE) as, in the smaller schools/Nurseries, it would be expected that DofE would be present for the telephone call. Larger schools are to have some of SLT present to make notes. DofE will be present if requested in the larger schools
- IT support will be allocated to the school for the full 2 days if someone is not already based on your site. The COO will arrange this on the afternoon of the phone call
- It is expected that the DofE will be present on the site for the whole 2 (1) days, and as many of her team as possible
- In the 90 minutes follow up call, please establish which areas the Deep Dives will focus on, which policies and documents will be needed, and which staff need to be interviewed
- Please secure an interview with Trust representatives and a slot for your Chair of Governors (or their representative). The Chair, the COO, and the DofE can all be together (any other governors are of course welcome), with a separate slot for the CEO to speak if possible. The DofE can be in any interviews with you should you wish
- As soon as this rota of activities is established, please alert the DofE, so that we can support by allocating the Directors of Maths and English where necessary. In talks, all smaller schools have welcomed this idea
- It is expected that the DofE will be at the final de-briefing, alongside your Chair of Governors (and other Governors who wish to attend)
- In the case of Nurseries, where inspections might still happen in holidays, there will always be an on-call rota, but primarily it will be expected that the DofE will be the prime link to Ofsted visits
- **In the case of any concerns during the inspection the DofE must be contacted immediately**

Appendix 21: The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of the Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

All members of the LGB should sign the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' declaration. A copy of this should be stored on GovHub.

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

I have received a copy of BEST's Governance, Scheme of Delegation and Operational Structure'. I accept the conditions of being a Governor therein described and will do my very best to promote BEST and its academies at all times.

All trustees and governors are required to confirm their agreement to this statement by completing the confirmation on Governor hub at the start of each academic year.

1. Introduction

Governance is a demanding and ever more complex activity – recruiting, developing and retaining the right people to be governors is essential if we want governance to be effective.

The development of high quality governance across BEST (Bedfordshire Schools Trust) was recognised with the award of the nationally renowned Governor Mark Award in 2019 – and we are incredibly proud that BEST is the first MAT to have achieved this award. Whilst this demonstrates that there is strong and effective governance in place within BEST it is critical to ensure this is maintained and developed – central to this is ensuring high quality support is available to all those who undertake governance roles within BEST.

In this document we are pleased to be able to set out the BEST Core Offer of support available to all those in a governance role within BEST. This extends to Local Governing Board (LGB) governors, BEST Trustees (sometimes called Directors) and BEST Members. For further information and an in-depth overview of how governance works within BEST please refer to the annually updated BEST Governance Handbook: (Insert hyperlink)

<https://www.bestacademies.org.uk/site/data/files/governance/legal/55AF0CC023E073949FC07DC7CD8FE367.pdf>

It should also be recognised that BEST, with 10 academies and approximately 65-70 governors, has to ensure that the support offered is appropriate to enable governors to function effectively but it is also proportionate in terms of resource devoted to that support. All support must ensure best value and comparable to the levels of support invested in staff members.

The key driver for governance support is to enable governors to fulfil the three core functions of governance (as defined in the DfE Governance Handbook, Ofsted Framework and Academies Financial Handbook) namely:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

2. BEST Core Offer

The BEST Support Services team provides the following support to all governors, free at point of delivery, throughout the year and upon request. The support will be responsive and community led and as such may vary from year to year - dependent on the existing skill set of governors and emerging demands from within and beyond the Trust.

Governance Handbook – the Handbook is a key resource to provide support including model terms of reference, clarification of roles and responsibilities, a clear Scheme of Delegation, policy schedule, model terms of reference, a Quality Assurance Calendar, a Code of Conduct and Website Compliance checklist

Governor Advice Line (p50 of BGHB) – access to ongoing support from Dr Alan Lee, CEO and National Leader of Education (NLE) for Members and Trustees or Craig Smith, COO and National Leader of Governance (NLG) for LGB members

- Contact details: seek further support where necessary from the BEST's Governor Advice line accessed via:
CEO, Dr Alan Lee, alee@bestacademies.org.uk or 07984 404578 (for Members and Trustees) or
COO, Craig Smith, csmith@bestacademies.org.uk or 07429 206091 (for LGB members).

Support for Chairs – bespoke tailored support for all Chairs within BEST, be that a new first time Chair or experienced Chairs managing specific issues.

Annual Governor Conference – a key, high profile event to share importance governance issues, celebrate successes and listen to governors. Now established in the annual cycle with high quality inputs and impressive attendance levels.

Annual Skills Audit – sharing of a Skills Audit to enable an annual audit of skills level and recognised need within each LGB or Trust Board. This supports reflective practice and an honest consideration of future support needs for the governing body group.

Governor Recruitment – any LGB seeking to recruit new members can request support; this support will be bespoke and may come in many forms such as advice, marketing materials, advocating on behalf of the LGB, help with shortlisting and interviewing etc.

Bespoke training – the Annual Skills Audit feeds into a bespoke programme of governor training – noticing the key issues emerging for the audits and relating them to the three core functions of governance. These courses will be provided by BEST, will be academy/BEST specific and tailored to meet the identified need in BEST. Appropriately trained experts will deliver them.

Induction Programme – BEST offers a detailed Induction programme for new and existing governors. The programme is designed to support governors to find out more about BEST and how the collective functions of governance work together across the Trust. New LGB members also receive support and induction at LGB level (the support varies from LGB to LGB)

Support to address statutory duties – governors need awareness of statutory responsibilities such as Public Sector Equality Duty/Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety, GDPR, etc. Support is provided in a variety of ways including Central Services support and online packages

Chair of Governors Group – this group has been established to support Chairs in their key role and share best practice across all aspects of governance within BEST. It is also anticipated that the group will support efficiency activity e.g. sharing key materials, supporting each other etc.

GovernorHub – online storage and communication portal to manage governor business and communications, used Trust wide for all governance activity

Governance Professional support – each LGB recruits its own Governance Professional but support is offered from BEST where appropriate and upon request

Ofsted inspection support – the approach to Ofsted Inspections is to ensure governance is considered in a Trust perspective i.e. how the LGB (as a sub group of the Trust Board) and Trust work together to ensure effective governance is in place. This includes COO/NLG attendance at the appropriate meeting during the inspection process

External Support – via professional contacts or membership, BEST has access to external advice and expertise such as Forum Strategy/Michael Pain, Confederation of Schools Trusts (CST)/Leora Cruddas, NGA/Emma Knights.

3. Additional Sources of Support

Whilst the BEST Core Offer should meet high-level need it may well be that additional support is identified and required at an individual board level (Members, Trust Board, individual academy LGB). Once identified the individual board should consider how best this need might be met – that could include a discussion with the BEST Central Services team (including the School Improvement and Teaching School elements) or could be from another governance board within BEST – increasingly LGB to LGB support is expected to become a preferred model of support given the developing expertise within BEST, perhaps facilitated and encouraged by the Chairs' Forum. However, there should also be a consideration of the additional support that governors can access from outside of BEST. Below is a list of the more prominent sources of support but is not an exhaustive list:

National Governance Association (NGA) <https://www.nga.org.uk/Home.aspx> – the national membership association for school governance. Much support (including a number of model documents, templates, policies) is available online and free to access but there are also membership options to consider

The Key for Governors <https://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/> – an off shoot for The Key for School Leaders, comprehensive website for support, again some free to access and membership options

Central Bedfordshire Council Governor Training Package

<https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/r4bm8sd28qpb7yftx1tcu7c8kgqidma2> - a comprehensive package of training, including induction training, open to all schools. As such, some courses will not be directly relevant to academies. Governors can sign up to individual courses or an unlimited use annual subscription.

Inspiring Governance <https://www.inspiringgovernance.org/> – DfE funded governor recruitment website and support organisation

Various Websites – to name a few

<https://www.moderngovernor.com> – interactive online e-learning modules, subscription based

<https://www.governorsforschools.org.uk> - recruiting governors

<https://www.theschoolbus.net/home> - subscription based advice and guidance service for schools

<https://www.academyambassadors.org> – recruiting governors for academies

<http://www.thegovernor.org.uk> – free advice and support for governors

Appendix 23: BEST Strategic Plan – Overview - 2016 – 2025

Year	Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction	Holding executive leaders to account for educational performance	Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent
Phase One - Delivering Clarity (BEMAT to BEST: mission, vision, values and operating principles)			
2016-17	BEMAT becomes BEST. Etonbury Academy Phase 1 new build is completed.	2 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 academy gained R/I inspection. 34 of 40 50 th percentile targets achieved	Support from reserves required, in response to significant funding cuts. Curriculum and staffing efficiencies. Curriculum reviews, financial planning metrics and benchmarking.
2017-18	ETA new build is completed Arlesey Nursery is opened. SCA joins BEST. Central Services Review, greater focus on SI.	3 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 RI inspection. 46 of 49 50 th percentile targets achieved. 2 successful Ofsted inspection.	Reserves used to support ETA staff expansion and first year of SCA deficit recovery plan. All academies ended the year with better balances than budgeted. Reserves increased slightly. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust/Nursery accounts brought up to the required standard. School Condition and Devolved Formula Capital allocations methodology implemented
2018-19	ETA becomes a fully extended-Secondary academy. LA joins BEST. 45% of central funds allocated for school improvement. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust fully integrated into BEST. Embed Compliance activity/QA calendar. First Governor Conference and concept of 'governance roles' developed. Gain National Governance Mark. ICT contract renewal reduced cost to all academies. Other contracts and SLAs reviewed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies. Re-designation of BEST Teaching School. BEST TS gains Appropriate Body status.	Academies set balanced budgets except for SCA but their deficit recovery is underway. Central finance team covered for absent local finance staff. Finance function strengthened further by 4 new qualified/skilled finance assistants. Ongoing training for all finance staff in place. Further optimisation of systems and processes. Continue to build up reserves to improve resilience against further funding cuts.
2019-20	PBA opens. Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies.	Financial modelling to establish level of risk and potential mitigation in plan for 2 tier move. SCA deficit recovery plan complete. Pix Brook financial planning for the DfE. Additional work from LVA absorbed at no extra cost by finance team. Nursery systems updated to accommodate growth, improve accuracy, reduce processing time and provide more professional interface with customers. Build reserves further.
Summary Achievements 2016-20	BEST comprises: 9 academies; 2 nurseries; 1 teaching school; 1 SCITT; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision.	All Ofsted inspections since joining BEST achieved a Good grade.	Financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year.
	All our academies remained open throughout the national COVID pandemic lockdown (Inc.: Bank Holidays) for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.		

**Phase Two - Delivering connection
(Three to two tier: uniting BEST, defining culture and laying foundations)**

2020-21	Preparing for and successfully opening all our Academies to all our children, in the face of the national COVID pandemic.		
	Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move. Another Academy joins BEST. Final year of 3 year Capital and Estates SCA programme – new Conditions Surveys and review of onward priorities.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies.	All academies working toward contributing at least 5% of their GAG income to the pooled reserves. Review and benchmark auditor services. Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 academy to estimate the extent of the restructuring required. Set LVA 2021/22 budget for primary structure. Incorporate Campton Lower academy and LVA nursery into trust systems and procedures.
2021-22	CBC re-set: fewer primary school places needed and 2 tier programme pushed back to 2025.		
	Intensify change to 2 tier preparations. Details to be confirmed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies.	Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school fine-tuned to clarify restructuring plan. All academies continue to increase to 5% of GAG reserves target. Review systems to ensure compatibility with the 2 tier structure. Create designated revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier.
2022-23	Gain DfE approval for PAN and age range changes. Work with CBC to progress and complete feasibility studies. Align nursery strategy, with 2 tier change.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies.	Establish process for managing revenue/pupil flow challenge – internally and with CBC. Work with schools to prepare for budget implications of two tier transition. Ensure capital funding plans reflect two tier conversion process to avoid duplication or wasted spend. Ensure HR implications are understood by all.
2023-24	Begin capital works, including two new builds (Campton Academy and Gothic Mede Academy). Open 6 th Form provision at Etonbury Academy. Ensure nursery provision is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies/nurseries.	Model flows of pupil numbers and monitor potential revenue and expenditure impact through budget forecast. Devise and begin implementation of HR Strategy Plan, with staff wellbeing as a primary focus. Designate revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier in place. Review and update budget forecasts as more accurate information becomes available. Strategically release funds to facilitate transition.
2024-25	Ensure that all BEST academies are ready to open as primary or secondary academies. Campton Academy to open as a new build lower-primary school and Lawnside Academy to become a primary school. Ensure all nurseries are sustainable.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all academies/nurseries.	Finalise staffing across BEST to meet 2 tier demands. Update budget forecast with accurate pupil numbers. Continue to strategically release funds to facilitate transition including targeted capital funds.
Summary Targets 2020-25	BEST comprises: 10 academies (7500); 8 nurseries; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all academies/nurseries.	Financial sustainability, maintaining a minimum of 5% of GAG in free reserves, while strategically using designated reserves to support academies through the negative effects of transition.

Appendix 24: Bedfordshire Schools Trust: Ofsted Inspections - following Ofsted inspection guidance issued June '23

Academy Name	Opening date as an academy	Date joined BEMAT/BEST	Date of Previous Inspection	Previous Inspection Judgement	Most Recent Inspection Date	Most Recent Inspection Grade	Next Inspection Due (approximate)
Campton Academy	1 st Nov 2020	1 st Nov 2020	31 st Oct 2006	Satisfactory	12 th Jan 2010	Outstanding	By Nov '23 ²⁴ (graded)
Etonbury Academy	1 st Nov 2011	1 st Nov 2011	16 th Nov 2017	Requires Improvement	11-12 th Feb 2020	Good	By Sept '25 (graded)
Gothic Mede Academy	1 st Nov 2013	1 st Nov 2013	27-28 th June 2017	Good	21-22 nd March '23 (ungraded)	Good	By March '27
Gravenhurst Academy	1 st Sept 2013	1 st Sept 2013	9 th Oct 2007	Good	7-8 th Mar 2011	Outstanding	By Jan '24 (graded)
Langford Village Academy	1 st June 2014	1 st June 2014	3-4 th May 2017	Good	22 nd & 23 rd Nov '22 (ungraded)	Good	By Nov '23 – Nov '24 (graded)
Lawnside Academy	1 st Jan 2019	1 st Jan 2019	28 th -29 th June 2017	Requires Improvement	28 th & 29 th March '23 (graded)	Good	By March '27
Pix Brook Academy	1 st Sept 2019	1 st Sept 2019	New Free School	n/a	n/a	n/a	By e/o 2023/24 academic year (graded)
Robert Bloomfield Academy	1 st May 2011	1 st May 2011	15 th May 2008	Outstanding	25-26 th June 2014	Outstanding	By Sept '25 (graded)
Samuel Whitbread Academy	1 st March 2012	1 st March 2012	31 st Oct – 1 st Nov 2017	Good	2 nd -3 rd March 2023 (ungraded)	Good	By March '27
St Christophers Academy	1 st April 2012	1 st Sept 2017	9 th Feb 2016	Good	26-27 th Sept 2019 (Section 8 Inspection)	Good	By Sept '25
BEST Nursery – Shefford	n/a	n/a	16 th Feb 2022	Requires Improvement	12 th December 2022	Good	By Dec '28 ²⁵
BEST Nursery – Arlesey	n/a	n/a	10 th Dec 2012	Good	27 th June 2018	Good	By June '24
BEST Nursery – Langford	Opened April 2021	n/a	30 th Nov '22	Inadequate	8 th March '23	Requires Improvement	By March '24 ²⁶

²⁴ CMA (graded inspection) – if classified as a 'new school' inspection by Nov '23, if classified as 'previously exempt from routine inspection' inspection by Jan '24

²⁵ Ofsted must inspect each provider within 6 years from the date of its last inspection (Early Years Inspection Handbook for Ofsted-registered Provision, updated April '23)

²⁶ Ofsted will return within 12 months from date of inspection of RI judgement (Early Years Inspection Handbook for Ofsted-registered Provision, Updated April '23)