Local Governing Body Terms of Reference

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

PURPOSE

The Local Governing Body (LGB) serves as a key component of governance within Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT). Its primary role is to oversee the strategic direction and performance of the academy it is assigned to, ensuring alignment with OHCAT's overarching vision and values, policies, and statutory responsibilities. The LGB is a designated committee of the OHCAT Board and must operate within the OHCAT's scheme of delegation and these terms of reference as authorised by the Board of Trustees.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Collaboration**: Work in partnership with the OHCAT Board and other academies in the Trust to foster improvement and innovation.
- **Integrity**: Uphold high standards of integrity, impartiality, and governance practice.
- **Impact-Driven**: Focus efforts on delivering measurable improvements in educational outcomes and the academy's overall performance.
- **Culture and Values**: Promote and model a positive culture that reflects OHCAT's core values, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

COMPOSITION

The composition of the LGB is:

- 2 elected parent local governors.
- 1 elected teacher local governor.
- 1 elected support staff local governor.
- The Principal.
- A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 9 Trust Appointed local governors.

A local governing body clerk to the LGB will be appointed by the governance team.

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- Every LGB must have a Chair and a Vice Chair in post.
- The Chair of the LGB is elected by LGB members and proposed to the OHCAT Board
- The Vice Chair of the LGB is elected by LGB members at the last meeting of the academic year. Members of staff cannot be elected Vice Chair.

for agreement at the last meeting of the academic year. Members of staff cannot be elected Chair.

TENURE

All local governors' terms of office are for three years, with the potential for reappointment.

QUORUM

- The quorum for an LGB meeting is 50% of the local governors in post, rounded up to the nearest whole number, or a minimum of three local governors, whichever is greater.
- The Principal is not counted towards the quorum.
- If the meeting is not quorate, no decisions or actions can be agreed upon.
- In the event of an inquorate meeting, it must be adjourned and rearranged within two weeks.

VOTING

- Every matter to be decided at an LGB meeting will be determined by a majority of votes from local governors present and who are entitled to vote on the matter.
- Each local governor has one vote.
- In the event of a tie, the Chair of the meeting will have the deciding vote.
- Proxy voting is not permitted; only members present at the meeting may cast a vote.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- **Support the OHCAT Vision**: Uphold and promote OHCAT's vision, ethos, values, and strategic objectives within the academy.
- **Academy Improvement Planning**: Contribute to the development and approval of the academy's improvement and development plans.
- **Performance Monitoring**: Monitor academic outcomes, ensuring that progress and attainment align with OHCAT's strategy and vision.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Act as a liaison between the academy, parents, students, and the wider community to enhance trust and collaboration.

2. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

- **Quality of Education**: Oversee the curriculum delivery and quality of learning experiences.
- **Student Outcomes**: Review data on student progress, attainment, attendance, and behaviour.
- **SEND**: Ensure the provision is effective and compliant with statutory requirements.
- **Safeguarding**: Ensure the academy complies with safeguarding policies and statutory guidance.

3. FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

- **Budget** Monitoring: Monitor the agreed budget, ensuring appropriate and agreed resource allocation.
- **Compliance**: Ensure the academy complies with OHCAT's financial regulations, policies and procedures.

4. OPERATIONAL AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

- **Risk Management**: Monitor the school risk register and escalate any concerns, via the Director of Governance, to the OHCAT Board as appropriate.
- **Policy Implementation**: Ensure academy compliance with OHCAT policies, statutory obligations and delegated school policies.
- **Health and Safety**: Monitor health and safety procedures and standards.
- **Governance Policies**: Adhere to OHCAT's scheme of delegation, governance policies and governance handbooks.
- **Link Governor Portfolio Holder Roles**: Have a named local link governor in the following areas:
  Curriculum, Learning & Outcomes; Health, Safety, Environment & Sustainability; Human Resources & Employee Relations; Local Governance; Safeguarding and Wellbeing; and Stakeholder & Community Engagement.

5. LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

- **Senior Leader Appointments**: Contribute to the recruitment and appraisal of senior leaders, as delegated by OHCAT.
- **Staff Recruitment**: Contribute to the recruitment process for other staff members, by participating in interview panels, reviewing candidates, and ensuring the recruitment process is in line with OHCAT policies and equality standards.
- **Staff Wellbeing**: Monitor staff morale and wellbeing, ensuring alignment with OHCAT's values and people strategy.
- **Training and Development**: Ensure professional development opportunities align with academy priorities and OHCAT strategy.

6. DECISION-MAKING

- **Delegated Authority**: Act within the boundaries of authority delegated by the OHCAT Board.
- **Recommendations to the OHCAT Board**: Provide insights and recommendations on academy-specific needs and priorities to inform OHCAT wide strategies.

7. TRAINING AND COMPLIANCE

- **Mandated Training**: All local governors must complete required training within the prescribed timeframe, including safeguarding, governance, and any other mandatory courses specified by OHCAT.
- **Regulatory Compliance**: Local governors must adhere to all governance regulations, including declarations of interest, safeguarding checks, and participation in self-assessment or performance reviews as required by the OHCAT Board.
- **Continuous Development**: Local governors are encouraged to engage in ongoing professional development to enhance their skills and effectiveness in fulfilling their governance duties.

8. MONITORING THROUGH SCHOOL VISITS

- **Purpose**: Local governors must conduct termly visits to the academy to gain firsthand insights into its day-to-day operations, evaluate the implementation of improvement plans, and ensure alignment with OHCAT's vision and policies.
- **Protocol**: Visits will be conducted termly, must be planned in advance with the Principal (or appropriate senior leadership team lead) and follow OHCAT's agreed protocol for local governor visits. A written report summarising observations will be completed for each visit

- **Focus Areas**: Visits should be aligned with the LGB's link governor roles and strategic priorities, such as reviewing the quality of learning and learning opportunities; observing pupil behaviour and wellbeing; assessing the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures; and monitoring progress on specific improvement objectives.

and shared at the next LGB meeting to inform discussion and decision-making.

9. GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS AND SELF-EVALUATION

- **Annual Self-Evaluation**: The LGB must undertake an annual self-evaluation, using OHCAT's agreed framework, to assess its effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure alignment with OHCAT's strategic goals and governance standards.
- **Performance Review**: The evaluation should include feedback from members, a review of meeting outcomes, and an assessment of compliance with responsibilities and statutory requirements.
- **Action Plan**: Findings from the self-evaluation will be shared with Trustees and should be used to create an action plan to address areas for development, with progress monitored throughout the year

MEETING REQUIREMENTS

FREQUENCY

- The LGB shall meet once per term (three times per academic year).
- The LGB will also hold one pay committee before the end of October to determine the pay of teaching staff in accordance with Trust Policy. There are separate terms of reference for this committee.
- Other additional meetings, in agreement with the Director of Governance, may be convened in exceptional circumstances, such as a specific time-limited working group, during an Ofsted inspection, or significant academy-level issues.

LENGTH

- Meetings will be limited to 2 hours' duration, except in very exceptional circumstances.

AGENDA

- The clerk, in consultation with the Chair, Principal and the Governance Manager will prepare an agenda that focuses on:
  - Academic performance and pupil outcomes.
  - Safeguarding and welfare issues.
  - Financial and resource monitoring.
  - Staff wellbeing and development.
  - Progress on academy improvement plans.
  - Statutory requirements.
- Agendas and supporting documents must be circulated to members at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Additional Agenda Items:

- Any local governor wishing to raise an item of urgent business must notify the Chair at least 72 hours before the meeting, where practical.
- The Chair will determine whether the item should be delegated to an individual for

	resolution or included in the current or next agenda.
ATTENDANCE	
• Local Governors are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. In the event of unavoidable absence, members must notify the Chair and Clerk in advance.	• Repeated non-attendance without valid reason may lead to removal from the LGB.
MINUTES AND REPORTING	
• Minutes of each meeting will be recorded by a designated clerk and circulated to the Chair and Principal within 14 days for review before dissemination to all local governors within 21 days of the meeting. • Key decisions and actions will be highlighted, and unresolved issues will be escalated to the Director of Governance as necessary.	• Minutes will be formally approved and signed at the subsequent meeting and stored in compliance with OHCAT's record-keeping policies. • Agreed Part A (non-confidential) minutes must be made available for inspection by any interested person upon request.
Annual Meeting Schedule	
• An annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the end of the previous academic year to ensure proper planning and coordination with reporting timelines.	
Participation	
• Members are expected to review all relevant documents prior to meetings and attend fully prepared to contribute.	• Members are encouraged to actively participate in discussions, question assumptions, and contribute their expertise.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

• If there are concerns regarding the performance, conduct, or effectiveness of the LGB, these should be raised with the Chair of the LGB in the first instance. • If the concerns cannot be resolved at this level or involve the Chair directly, they should be escalated to the Director of Governance.	• Measures could include undertaking a review of the LGB's performance, governance processes, or individual member conduct and implementing appropriate actions, such as additional training, mentoring, or changes in membership. • Persistent concerns or breaches of governance standards may lead to the OHCAT Board intervening directly in the LGB's operations.
For further guidance and clarification on local governing bodies and the role of local governors, please refer to the Terms of Reference guidance or talk to the Governance Manager.	
The LGB Terms of Reference will be reviewed at least annually by the OHCAT Board to ensure relevance and effectiveness in meeting governance needs and can be changed at any time.	

Reviewed and agreed by OHCAT Trustees: 17 October 2025

Updated to reflect the revised terminology, replacing 'portfolio holders' with 'link governor roles' and introducing the new role titles. In response to feedback from Chairs of Governors, risk management has been repositioned from financial oversight to operational and regulatory compliance. Additionally, the term monitor has been replaced with oversee, to better reflect the governance role of local governors in reviewing, while monitoring remains the responsibility of senior leaders and the executive senior leadership team.