



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

# Local Schools Board

## Terms of Reference & Governance Scheme of Delegation

This policy is a mandatory policy for all Vine schools and must be implemented with no amendments.

**"I am the vine; you are the branches.  
If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit"  
(John 15:5)**

The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust	
Approved by:	The Vine Schools Trust
Signature:	Tim Rose Chairman
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Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

## Vision & Values

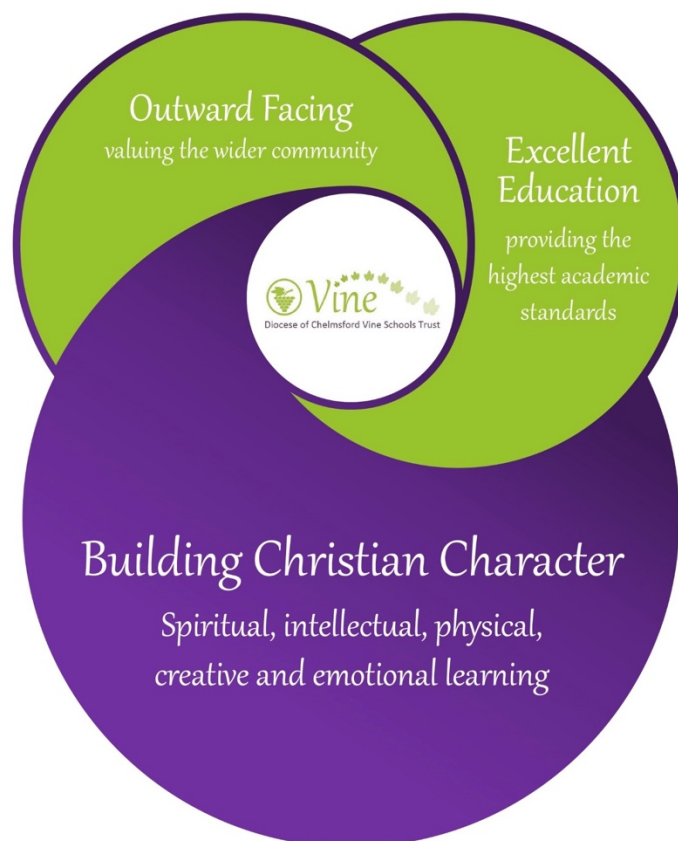
**V**  
**I**  
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**E**

**Valuing every person**

**Inspiring great teaching**

**Nurturing academic excellence and Christian Character**

**Excelling, unlocking great potential**



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## 1. General

- 1.1 The overarching responsibility for the governance of the Trust and its schools lies with the Vine Board of Directors. The Directors are responsible for setting and monitoring strategic objectives, as well as compliance with charity and company law and the Vine Trust funding agreement.
- 1.2 The Board of Directors fulfil the three core functions of governance:
  - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
  - Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
  - Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.
- 1.3 Responsibility and accountability to the Trust Board of Directors for the three functions lies with the Chief Executive Officer and the day to day operational running of schools is delegated to the headteacher of each school.
- 1.4 The responsibilities of the Trust Board, Chief Executive Officer and headteachers are the subject of the Vine Schools Trust Scheme of Delegation.

## 2. Local Governance – Local Schools Boards

- 2.1 To enable the Directors to fulfil their responsibility eight regional Local Schools Board's work on behalf of the Vine Trust Board of Directors and undertake delegated governance of between 2 and 4 four schools. The **Governance Scheme of Delegation** (on [Page 11](#)) outlines their responsibilities which are to:
  - maintain and develop the Christian distinctiveness of the school including links with the linked church(es);
  - ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction set the Vine Trust Board along with the individual school vision with the context of the Church of England's Vision for Education;
  - be aware of and support the wellbeing of the Executive Headteacher/headteacher(s), staff and children in each school;
  - hold the Executive Headteacher/headteachers to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils primarily through the termly Headteachers Report, analysing performance data and holding the headteachers to account for progress against the School Improvement Plan and School Improvement Leads Reports;
  - ensuring the effective and efficient performance management of staff (but not the headteacher) is carried out under the terms of the latest Vine Schools Trust Pay Policy;
  - ensure that the school has a Trust agreed budget and that any forecast variances have been reported to the COO. Full financial governance is managed directly by the Vine Chief Operating Officer (COO) overseen and accountable to by the Finance, Audit & Risk Committees of the Vine Trust Board. The role of the Local Schools Board will typically not be involved in the detail.
- 2.2 The Local Schools Board **Governance Scheme of Delegation** must be signed annually on behalf the Local Schools Board by the Chair.

- 2.3 Each Local Schools Board must have a Chair and a clerk. The Chair and clerk are appointed by the Vine Trust Board. The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher(s) of the schools in the regional group cannot be the chair or clerk. However, it is possible for another Local Schools Board member to act as chair or clerk in an emergency situation where the appointed person is not available (see below).
- 2.4 The membership of the Local Schools Board is set out below (see [Page 8](#)). It is possible to co-opt members with the approval of the Trust Board as long as the Governance Scheme of Delegation is followed.
- 2.5 The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher of each school in the regional group is expected to attend all Local Schools Board meetings, at least for the part of the meeting relevant to their school(s). Exceptions are set out in the Pecuniary and Business Interests Policy.
- 2.6 Local Schools Board Members must complete the current application or commitment form and skills assessment when joining a Local Schools Board and then bi-annually. They are all appointed by the Vine Trust Board.
- 2.7 All Local Schools Board members must be able to annually sign and adhere at all times to the Vine **Governance Code of Conduct** which includes the Nolan Principles.

### 3. Quorum

- 3.1 For Local Schools Board meetings, the quorum is one half of the numbers of the Local Schools Board rounded up which must not be less than three.

### 4. Meetings

- 4.1. A Local Schools Board will meet at least four times a year, and more usually once every half term and when appropriate will rotate around the schools they are responsible for.
- 4.2. Meetings will not be open to the public, but minutes approved at the next meeting shall be made available, usually on the schools' websites.
- 4.3. Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the Local Schools Board considers confidential is to be recorded on a separate confidential minute and do not have to be made available.
- 4.4. In the absence of the chair or there is, at the time, a vacancy in the office of the chair, the vice-chair shall act as the chair for the purposes of the meeting. where in the circumstances the Vice-chair is also absent from the meeting or there is at the time a vacancy in the office of vice chair, the members of the Local Schools Board shall elect one of their number to act as a chair for the purposes of that meeting, provided that the person elected shall neither be a person who is employed by the Trust.
- 4.5. In the absence of the clerk the Local Schools Board shall choose a clerk for that meeting from among their number (someone who is not a headteacher of one of the schools in the regional group).
- 4.6. Any decisions where there is no overall agreement shall be determined by a simple majority of votes of Local Schools Board members present and voting.
- 4.7. The Chair will have a casting vote on an equality of votes.
- 4.8. Meetings may sometimes be held virtually by agreement of all the members of the Local Schools Board so long as at least half the meetings during each academic year are held in person. Individuals may join any meeting virtually with the agreement of the Chair.

## 5. Agenda and Minutes

- 5.1. The agenda of each Local Schools Board meeting will be provided by the Chair after consultation with the Vine Schools Trust Board and/or CEO.
- 5.2. The draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated to members within two school weeks of the meeting with an expectation that action points are followed up.
- 5.3. The minutes of the Local Schools Board shall be forwarded to the CEO or his/her delegated person after they have been agreed by the Chair and before approval at their next meeting.

## 6. Duties

- 6.1. The **Governance Scheme of Delegation** (see [Page 11](#)) provides a list of the delegated responsibilities of the Local Schools Board.
- 6.2. General Duties of the Local Schools Board relating to each of its schools include but are not limited to:
  - 6.2.1. Implement and work within the parameters of the **Governance Scheme of Delegation**.
  - 6.2.2. Implement all of the Vine Schools Trust policies found on the Trust website.
  - 6.2.3. Appoint a member of the Local Schools Board as Safeguarding Member to meet the requirements of the Role Description ([see Page 9](#)) and consider all safeguarding and equalities matters regularly.
  - 6.2.4. Regularly consult each of the schools Community Board seeking and receiving local intelligence on matters under consideration.
  - 6.2.5. Receive an annual report (or more often if appropriate) from each schools Community Board focused on:
    - Marketing/promotion of the school,
    - Relationship with the local Church,
    - relationships with the wider community,
    - the strengths and achievements of the school,
    - pupil achievements celebrated.
  - 6.2.6. To oversee arrangements for educational visits and approve overnight visits.
  - 6.2.7. To ensure all statutory requirements for reporting and publishing information are met and the school website content is fully compliant and presented in an accessible way.
  - 6.2.8. To consider recommendations from external reviews of the school (e.g. Ofsted or Vine Improvement Leads), agree actions as a result of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.
  - 6.2.9. To ensure that all children have equal opportunities.
  - 6.2.10. To support the school during Ofsted and SIAM Inspections with at least the Chair attending an interview with the Inspector in person or virtually.
  - 6.2.11. Each member of the Local Schools Board, and especially the Chair, to arrange a number of 'profile and presence' opportunities during the school year at each school, not necessarily only at public events or in any way linked to reporting on the school's effectiveness.

## 7. Members

### 7.1.1. Membership of a Local Schools Board (LSB)

Member	Number	Term
Chair	1	4 years
Another Vine Head or deputy	1	2 years
Educationalist	1	4 years
Members	2	4 years

Trust Board members may also attend LSB meetings as full members.

### 7.1.2. Notes:

The LSB might possibly include one ex-officio incumbent (\*) – where there are 2 or more churches represented by the schools it will be necessary to come to an agreement about who is a member. However, usually the incumbent's role will be more usefully deployed on the Community Board releasing them from potential conflicts of interests and enabling them to be effectively the Chaplain (a pastoral role) and support Collective Worship and RE.

The PCC may also wish to propose one or two members to the Community Board (see the Terms of Reference for Community Boards).

\*It is essential that the LSB will have at least one person whose experience and commitment will equip them to ensure that the Christian character of the schools is seen and understood to be core to all decision making. It is an occupational requirement that they are capable of leading the board in a reflection of a Christian nature and lead in prayer. This should replicate the more historic Foundation governor role.

### 7.1.3. Members' Skills

When considering the makeup of the board a mix of the following skills is important:

1. experience of chairing a board/governing board or committee;
2. experience of being a governor/trustee in another school or being a board member in another sector;
3. committed to and experienced in the vision and ethos of a Christian worldview;
4. proficient in prioritising, assessing and mitigating risk in school improvement;
5. expertise in curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment;
6. experience of agreeing the range and format of information and data needed in order to hold leaders to account;
7. used to thinking and discussing about the interface of faith and education;
8. have an understanding of the board's duties in relation to safeguarding including Prevent;
9. committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity;
10. experience of complying with legal, regulatory and financial frameworks and statutory guidance;
11. confidence and ability to speak up when concerned about non-compliance.



### 7.1.4. Specific roles for Members

The Local Schools Board will need to decide which roles to allocate to individual members. These will usually include:

1. Chair – appointed by the Vine Trust Board
2. Vice Chair – elected by the Local Schools Board
3. Church School Effectiveness to include Collective Worship and RE
4. SEND
5. Safeguarding
6. Quality of Education (School Improvement) – usually the educationalists on the LSB
7. Compliance

### 7.2. Role Description – Safeguarding member

The role of the safeguarding member is key to understanding the effectiveness of safeguarding for everyone in the school. The member should have undertaken or have specific training and understand the requirements of safeguarding guidance and legislation and become:

‘confident in their challenge to executive leaders on strategies for monitoring and improving the behaviour and safety of pupils.’  
(Competency Framework for Governance (DfE 2017))

Key aspects of the safeguarding members role include:

- Understand the safeguarding requirements;
- Fulfil all aspects of the Priority 3 of the Governance Scheme of Delegation;
- Support the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Meet regularly with the designated safeguarding lead and any other relevant other staff
- Report to the Local Schools Board about how effective safeguarding is;
- Report to the Vine Schools Trust Board about how effective safeguarding is;
- Check that the school is compliant with statutory guidance;
- Check out whether there is a consistency in safeguarding across the whole school;
- Make sure that there are effective systems in place to keep vulnerable children safe;

The role of the safeguarding member is to help ensure that safeguarding is effective and not to carry out the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The role is specifically focused on strategic issues. This means that it is not appropriate that decisions about individual cases should be reviewed by the safeguarding governor.

The role of the safeguarding member is to carry out the key tasks on behalf of the Local Schools Board and the Vine Schools Trust Board. Providing evidence and reports to the Director with Safeguarding responsibility will be an essential part of the role.

## 8. Governance Scheme of Delegation

Refer to the main Scheme of delegation for responsibilities of Trust Board, CEO and Headteachers

1.	<b>Priority 1: Church School, Religious Education and Collective Worship</b>
1.1.	Reference and apply the Church of England Vision for Education in all discussions and decisions.
1.2.	Maintain and develop the Christian distinctive foundation of the school including links with the linked church(es).
1.3.	Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction set by the Vine Trust Board along with the individual school visions.
1.4.	Continue to support the wellbeing of the Executive Headteacher/headteachers in particular and staff and children in each school in general.
1.5.	Responsibility for ensuring the provision of RE is in line with the Vine agreed syllabus.
1.6.	Ensure the arrangements for Collective Worship are in line with the Vine policy
2.	<b>Priority 2 : School Improvement</b>
2.1.	Ensuring each school is aiming at least a 'good' level of education to all pupils.
2.2.	Ensuring (or at least working towards) 'good' academic progress and standards.
2.3.	Ensuring the National Curriculum taught to all students and to consider any disapplication.
2.4.	Ensuring a curriculum policy and curriculum policies are in place and are being implemented.
2.5.	Review progress against the School Improvement Plan.
2.6.	Challenge outcomes and progress in meeting the School Improvement Leads Reports.
2.7.	Review and challenge ongoing pupil assessment and pupil outcomes data.
2.8.	Review the impact of Pupil and Sports Premium Grants.
2.9.	Determine the Relationships and Sex Education Policy for each school in line with the Vine policy.
2.10.	Review the implementation of Relationship and Sex Education Policy.
2.11.	Review the implementation of British Values.
3.	<b>Priority 3: Safeguarding</b>
3.1.	Ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is being followed in practice.
3.2.	Ensure that records are kept securely and in one place.

3.3.	Ensure that there are appropriate safeguards in place for students placed with Alternative Providers.
3.4.	Ensure that there is appropriate monitoring and tracking in place for vulnerable students.
3.5.	Ensure that there is a consistent approach to safeguarding and child protection across the school.
3.6.	Ensure that the curriculum for safeguarding reflects the risks for the young people in the area.
3.7.	Ensure that safer recruitment processes are in place.
3.8.	Ensure that the Single Central Record is compliant for each school.
4.	<b>Priority 4 : Staffing</b>
4.1.	Headteacher appointments are undertaken by the Vine Schools Trust and usually the Chair will be on panel.
4.2.	Deputy Headteacher appointments are undertaken by the Vine Schools Trust and headteacher and usually the Chair will be on panel
4.3.	Implement pay policy.
4.4.	Receive annual recommendations on staff salary increases (not the headteacher).
4.5.	Review staff complement in each school against budget constraints and benchmarking.
4.6.	Performance management of Headteacher is undertaken by the Vine Schools Trust with the Chair on the panel.
5.	<b>Priority 5: Behaviour and Discipline</b>
5.1.	Ensure the Vine Schools Trust Behaviour Policy is being implemented.
5.2.	Keep under review the level of exclusions in each school.
5.3.	Review any permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where the pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in total in a term or would lose the opportunity to sit public examinations.
5.4.	Obtain support from the Trust in arranging a panel hearing where and when the duty to consider an exclusion becomes necessary.
6.	<b>Priority 6: Admissions</b>
6.1.	To consult annually before setting an Admissions Policy, including with the Vine Trust Board.
6.2.	To consult before amending the Admissions Policy, including with the Vine Trust Board.
6.3.	To establish an Admissions Policy in line with the Vine Schools Trust Admissions Policy and approved by the Vine Trust Board.
7.	<b>Priority 7: Finance</b>
7.1.	Accept and implement all Vine Trust financial policies which can be found on the Vine Website.
7.2.	Notify the Vine Chief Operations Officer (COO) of any financial concerns/vulnerabilities.

7.3.	Ensure that an annual school budget has been provided by the Vine Trust for each school.
7.4.	Supporting the headteachers in responding to budget concerns raised by the COO.
8.	<b>Priority 8: General Matters</b>
8.1.	Ensure the implementation of Vine Health & Safety Policy & review annual professional reports.
8.2.	Setting times of school sessions, term dates and holidays in line with Vine Trust guidance.
8.3.	The Chair to receive any complaints under the Vine Complaints Policy and report them to CEO and support any process as appropriate.
8.4.	Provide panel members for complaints and other panels when possible for any school in the Vine Schools Trust.
8.5.	Ensure that the Risk Register is reviewed and updated at least termly.

END