

WELCOME TO THE CHARTER SCHOOL EAST DULWICH

Welcome to The Charter School East Dulwich, an inclusive, dynamic and academically rigorous secondary school serving the vibrant communities of East Dulwich and South Camberwell.

Opened in September 2016, we have just celebrated our founding cohort of students successfully completing their A level courses in the summer of 2023.

As part of The Charter Schools Educational Trust, we are founded on the conviction that excellent education transforms lives and strengthens the diverse communities that we serve. We are a school at the heart of our community, where families are important and all voices matter. Relationships are built on the foundations of compassion, equality and mutual respect, so that students, families and staff are valued and free to excel.

We teach our students to be curious, work hard, be kind and do the right thing. They will be happy in themselves, excited about their future and ambitious for success. They will leave us with the knowledge, understanding, and character traits that enable them to play a full and productive part in our modern, democratic society. Our specialist staff support students in seeking and securing opportunities that enable an exciting and successful continued personal learning journey, in further education or work.

Excellence requires hard work, and we have high expectations of all our students. We expect them to engage with powerful knowledge about the academic, physical and cultural world. Exemplary personal conduct is at the heart of our students' development, and we expect them to build on this by contributing actively and generously to their community, having a positive impact on others. We expect them to commit to developing their individual aptitudes both inside and outside the classroom, participating enthusiastically in the extra-curricular life of the school, through additional sports and specialist clubs and societies.

In return, we provide high quality teaching based on academic excellence and an innovative but rigorous approach so that all students have the chance to perform above and beyond and where no child is left behind. Our staff work tirelessly to provide students with the support, expertise and encouragement needed in order to achieve their goals.

As we look to further develop our local governing body, we are especially looking for governor volunteers with experience in either governance roles more generally or knowledge of the education sector.

We actively welcome and encourage applications from communities who tend to be under-represented in school governance. We are committed to continuous improvement in how representative we are of our local community, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, professional background, and all other aspects of diversity.

AN OVERVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE AT THE CHARTER SCHOOLS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Each school within the Trust has a local governing body ('LGB') composed of a group of volunteers drawn from the wider community. These volunteers bring a range of skills, expertise, and professional experience to support the school's senior leadership team at a strategic level. Our Local Governors provide essential links between the school, parents/carers, the local community, business, and the Trust board, which is ultimately responsible to the Department of Education for the performance of all its schools.

Our local governing body is made up of dedicated volunteers who bring a range of skills and experience from their professional, personal, and volunteering lives. We are dedicated to diversity among our governing body, and to ensuring that every voice is heard respectfully.

How do Local Governing Bodies work in our Trust?

Local Governing Bodies are essentially a committee of the main Trust Board and have functions and responsibilities delegated as directed by the Trust scheme of delegation. Each school in the Trust is, and should be, distinct from others in the Trust, able to respond to the needs of its pupils and its community. The Trust works as one team for the good of all the pupils in our communities - the schools collaborate, share resources, knowledge and best practice.

At the same time, our schools have the autonomy to explore and learn from different practices and know that true leadership and personal accountability are founded on ownership and self-direction. Our LGBs work to provide independent strategic oversight of the management and operation of each school, with the aim of improving the quality of education and raising standards, in line with the overall strategic direction of the Trust. A school's governing body does not run the school on a day-to-day basis; this is the job of the Headteacher and other senior staff. Each LGB has a key role to play in the overall development and success of the Trust and in contributing to joint working and sharing best practice between all the schools within the Trust.

Local Governors responsibilities are to:

- To review the school's alignment with the overall Trust vision and values and key strategic priorities
- To hold the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- To agree the annual school development plan and monitor performance and impact against this and the key priorities identified each year.
- To receive information and review, the quality of teaching and curriculum development in the school.
- To monitor and ensure effective use and impact of Pupil Premium, and any other Government funding where appropriate.
- To receive and review the school's external assessment results and end of key stage destinations (at Year 11 and Year 13) against local and national standards.
- To agree an annual schedule of link governor meetings and governor visits to ensure oversight of the school's key priorities and statutory oversight of safeguarding and SEND provision.

- To be informed on its individual school budget and to monitor how the school is spending its budget in line with approved budget levels.
- To approve school level expenditure in line with the Trust Financial Scheme of Delegation
- To review the school's risk register at least annually and whenever there are significant changes to operational risks.
- To review the school's compliance with statutory regulations, including health & safety, safeguarding and SEND
- To be informed on the training and professional development of school staff.
- To monitor staff wellbeing and workload through regular reports from the school SLT.
- To monitor how the school manages key stakeholder engagement including pupils, staff and parents and feedback from annual surveys.
- To approve school specific policies where required.
- To review and approve, through the LGB Pay Committee, proposed performance related pay increases for school staff each year
- To be informed on the appointment and dismissal of Headteachers. The appointment panel will include the Chair of the LGB.
- Through the Chair of the LGB, to be consulted on, and participate in the Headteacher performance management process with the CEO, and which is reported to the LGB.
- To support the central governance function with the recruitment and induction of new governors (e.g. through interviews, training, skills audits, self-evaluation etc)
- To complete regular (annual) self-evaluation to assess performance and identify priorities for improvement and development.
- To be responsible, with the clerk to the LGB, for the arrangements and ensuring correct membership and process for exclusion and complaint panels, following Trust policies and procedures.

Local Governors are appointed by the Trust Board except for parent governors, who are elected by parents and carers, and staff governors, who are elected by all school staff.

What does this look like in practice?

Local Governing Body meetings - Full LGB meetings are normally held a minimum of four times per year and, whilst there are many important aspects of the role, the most important is the business that takes place at these meetings.

School visits – The LGBs are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of a school and its curriculum. School visits will help local governors to understand more about their school and the reality of school life. Governor visits to classrooms are not a form of inspection but serve as a clear monitoring function on the implementation of the school's strategic planning.

Committee/Working party meetings – The LGB is in effect a committee of the main Trust Board but local governors may be asked to volunteer to sit on other committees or working parties, either at Trust level or at school level to explore key strategic issues in greater depth. Most local governors are members of one or two committees, whose work is reported back to the full governing body and/or the Trust. This is so all governors are kept informed of matters and working progress. Typical committees can include Finance, Audit & Risk, Educational Standards, Special Educational Needs, and one-off projects.

Reading & Agenda - Prior to meetings, you will receive an agenda, a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting and any other relevant papers that are to be discussed. It is recommended that you take time to read and familiarise yourself with these documents prior to the meeting. Make notes of anything you are unsure of so you can ask questions at the meeting if necessary

Training – The Trust buys into a variety of training provision including the National Governance Association's online training suite. We expect that all governors will complete a governor induction course as soon as possible after taking up their position.

All governors also have access to the NGA membership and SchoolBus.

Time commitment

Local governors are expected to attend at least 4 full local governor meetings per year, usually held in the evening and lasting approximately two hours and which will have required reading of reports from the school leadership before each meeting. There is also an expectation that all local governors will sit on additional or ad hoc committees and working parties, and/or will take on a link governor role which will involve termly visits with the link area staff lead at the school and producing a report for the wider LGB.

Local governors are encouraged to attend school events such as annual school productions, parent forums, concerts and art shows and complete appropriate training.

An appointed or elected local governor's term of office is usually four years.

The Department for Education Governance handbook and competency framework provides guidance on the roles and duties of governing boards, and advice on the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be effective: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Find out more about our school at www.chartereastdulwich.org.uk

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