

Astrea Academy Trust: Local Committee Chair

Role Description

The chair plays a pivotal role in the oversight and governance at an Astrea school. The chair's commitments to the school will be greater and have more insight into all aspects of its operation, than that of committee members.

Appointment and Induction

The chair of a TMB is appointed by the Trust; LGCs may elect their own chair at the first meeting of each year.

Role and Responsibilities

Local committees work through the principle of collective action and decision-making. The key role of the chair is to lead the committee in effectively supporting the school to ensure that the pupils are able to achieve to the best of their ability, including taking increasing responsibility for recruitment to the committee, in consultation with the Trust.

The committee should focus on monitoring the implementation of the school's educational performance, ensuring the promotion of high expectations and effective teaching and learning. The chair should also contribute to this aim outside of committee meetings and ensure that other members do the same, guided by the Principal. This can be through attending school events, sitting on panels and encouraging other members to take on a link role in an area such as Safeguarding, SEND or Grants.

As well as ensuring that the committee works well and discharges its responsibilities, the chair must work closely with the Principal to advise, challenge, help and mentor. The chair should be involved in school's strategic planning, shaping the educational model and planning for the long term.

An Astrea chair is likely to have many of the following attributes:

- Clear alignment with the vision and ethos of the Trust (essential)
- Commitment to Astrea's principles and value partners (essential)
- A working knowledge of primary- or secondary-level education (as appropriate)
- Experience of strategic direction and guidance
- Strong leadership and management skills
- Desire to guide their school to work collaboratively within the Trust
- A good knowledge of the local area and community

Accountability

The Chair has an important role in accounting for the school's and the local committee's performance. These are primarily based around the wider committee's five core accountabilities:

Accountability	Expectation	Format/ source of evidence
To ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of Astrea is maintained within each school.	Chairs will be able to explain the vision, ethos and strategic direction to stakeholders and will be able to demonstrate to Trustees how the local committee is securing these at a school level.	Chair's report Minutes Principal feedback
To hold school leaders to account for educational performance and the inclusion of all pupils and, through the Chair, to account to Trustees for this.	Chairs will be clear on what is expected of the school and its Principal and will be able to demonstrate to Trustees how accountability is rendered. Chairs will be able to tell Trustees how well the school is doing against these expectations and what factors account for this.	Chair's report Minutes Principal feedback
To work with the central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained.	Chairs are able to confirm that each committee has a named safeguarding link who develops his or her skills, promotes rigorous discussion of safeguarding during and between meetings and who liaises with the central team lead for safeguarding. The committee should know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How effective safeguarding is at the school; - What are the main areas of strength; - What are the main areas of concern. 	Chair's report Minutes Principal feedback Safeguarding audit report
To promote positive parent, community and stakeholder engagement and to drive school-to-school partnerships for improvement within the Trust.	Chairs ensure that the work of the school takes account of the views of parents and the wider community, including third parties such as the Local Authority. The committee sets a culture in which the school actively encourages this engagement, particularly from under-represented groups.	Minutes Parent/community surveys
To identify, understand and report to Trustees any strategic risks facing the school.	Chairs ensure that there is discussion of strategic risks facing the school (i.e. those risks that threaten the achievement of strategic objectives) and that a clear minute of this is taken and reported to Trustees via the central governance lead.	Minutes

Alongside a representative of the Trust's central team, the Chair will also be invited to meet the lead inspector during an Ofsted visit. This is an important example of external accountability.

Commitment and Conduct

The average time commitment is approximately 1-2 days per month, encompassing the following activities:

- Meetings with the Principal
- At least four two-hour committee meetings each academic year
- Additional committee meetings, where applicable
- Interviewing and inducting new committee members
- Attending school visits and committee panels
- Representing the committee during Ofsted inspections
- Attending termly Link Trustee meetings

All committee members, including the chair, are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct, to undergo an enhanced disclosure DBS check and make an annual Declaration of Interest. This may require the chair to withdraw from specific discussions where s/he, a partner or close relative or associate stands to gain or where the chair is so close to a matter being discussed that it will be difficult for him or her to be impartial.