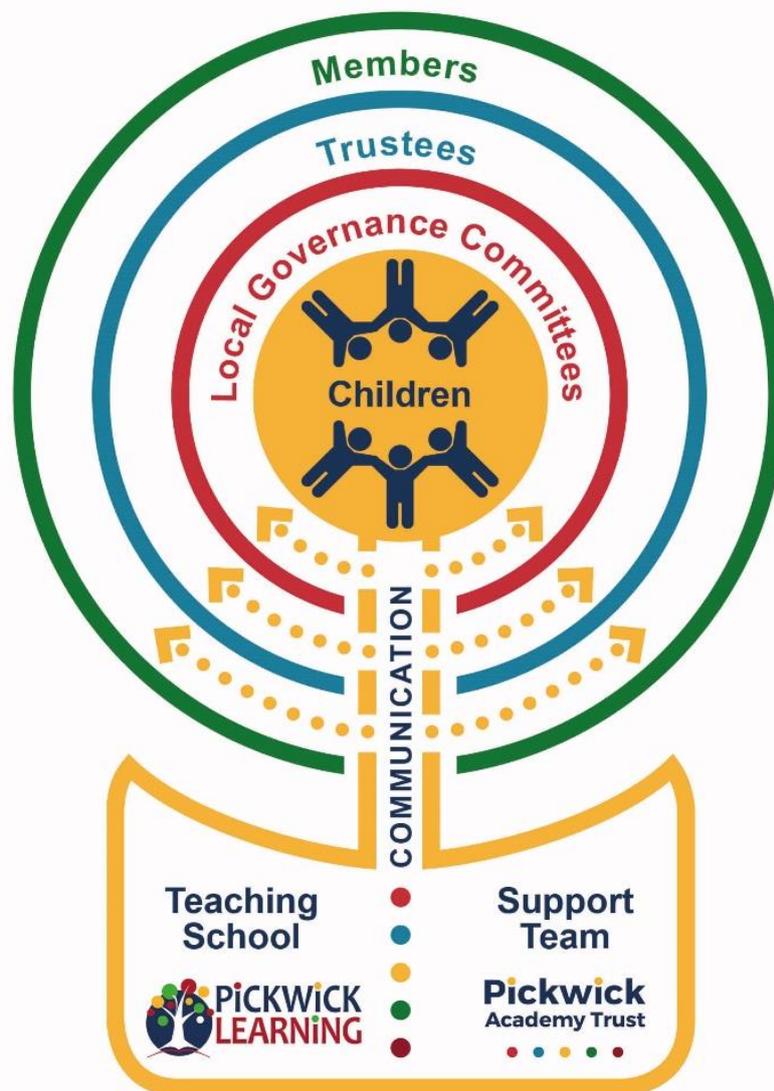


## Governance Arrangements at Pickwick Academy Trust

### Our organisational structure: The children at the centre of everything we do

The education of our children is the thing that drives us. Not *my* children or *your* children, but *our* children – the children in the communities that Pickwick Academy Trust serves. They are the reason we went into teaching in the first place; they are the reason we are committed to education; they are at the centre of our organisation. In all that we do, we ask ourselves, how will this impact on the outcomes and experiences of children?



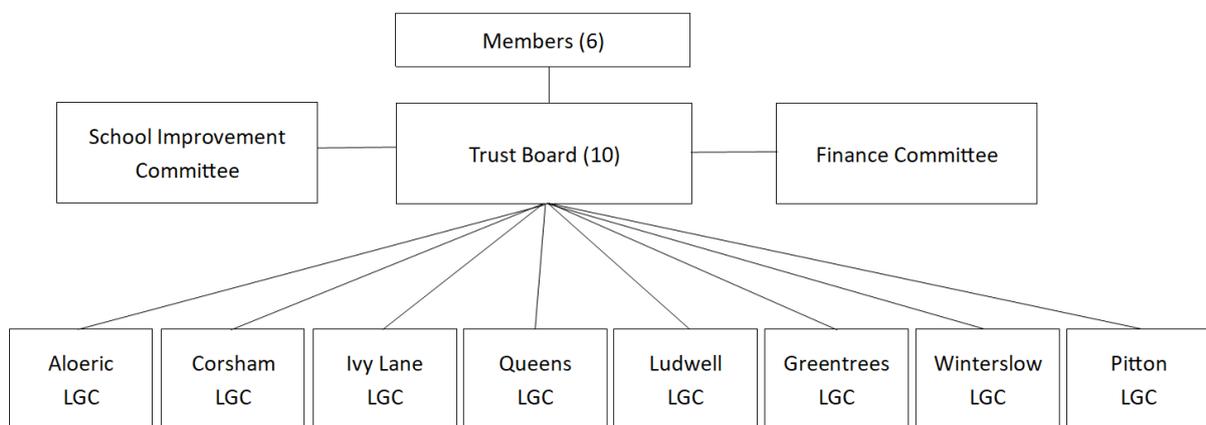
Our Trust has been built on moral purpose, developmental and continuous professional development and 'oneness' – one organisation committed to supporting all children to succeed academically, socially and emotionally, and as caring and thoughtful citizens. We are committed to inclusion, identifying the barriers children and families are facing, and supporting our parents as partners with us in their children's learning.

## Our organisational structure: Governance and the central team

### Governance

A traditional Local Authority maintained school Governing Body is the statutory accountable Governing Board of its school, but in a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), the Trust Board is the statutory Governing Board of all its academies. The Trust Board is overseen by a group of 'Members' who hold the Trust Board to account. Each school has a Local Governance Committee (LGC) which has delegated responsibilities defined by the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

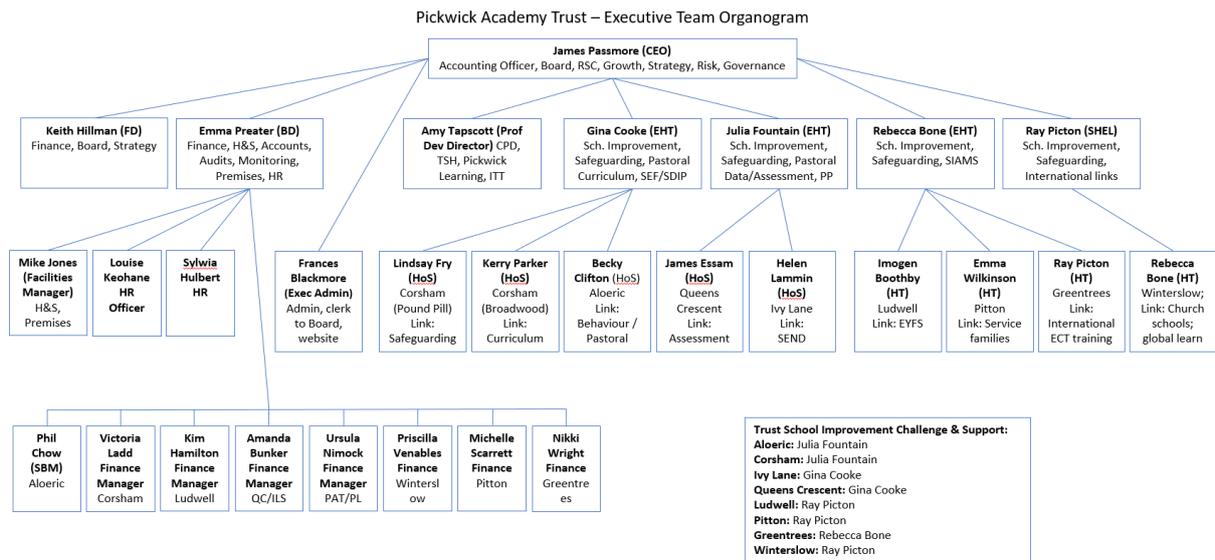
Each layer of governance within Pickwick Academy Trust works together to ensure schools have the resources they need to thrive, and provides support and challenge for school leaders.



### The central team

The central team is led by a Chief Executive Officer who is accountable for the performance of all the schools in the Trust. Executive Headteachers provide support and challenge to all the Headteachers/Heads of School, and the Finance and Business Directors oversee the work of HR, Health & Safety and Premises, and each school's business/finance managers. The central team also employs a Professional Development Director who leads on CPD and external development across the Trust.

The central team are held to account by the Trust Board and work closely with school leaders, Chairs of Governors and Local Governance Committees.



## Governance: Members, Trustees & Local Governance Committees

Pickwick Academy Trust's 'Articles of Association' set out the legal requirements in respect of Members and Trustees and some aspects of governance, and should be read in conjunction with our 'Constitution' and 'Scheme of Delegation'. The Constitution describes the governance structure for our Trust which is outlined below.

Our Scheme of Delegation sets out the agreed delegations for the Trust Committees and Local Governance Committees. The Scheme of Delegation includes useful appendices which summarise the key delegated responsibilities for decisions and policies. Whilst powers and duties can be delegated, the responsibility for all aspects of the Trust's work remains with the Trust Board.

### Members

The Members are responsible for holding the Trust Board to account. They monitor the work of the Trustees and ensure they are upholding the vision and values of the Trust. Members are responsible for appointing or removing Trustees, and provide support and challenge to the Trust Board.

### Trustees

Trustees are responsible for the strategic oversight, administration and management of the Trust and all its schools. They provide support and challenge to the central team, develop and deliver the Trust's vision, and ensure compliance with government and ESFA requirements, and company and charity law.

Their core functions are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision and ethos
2. Holding executive leaders to account
3. Overseeing effective financial performance

The Chair of the Board is responsible for ensuring effective functioning of the Board and setting professional standards of governance and accountability.

Trustees develop and approve Trust-wide policies for all the schools, ensure local governance is strong and effective and have the power to intervene if necessary. They have legal obligations through the Articles of Association of the Trust, and also under company and charity law, as trustees, for the proper conduct of the business of the Trust.

The Trust Board must be made up of Trustees with a broad range of skills and experience, and should include backgrounds encompassing: Education; Finance; Governance; Strategic Management, Legal, Premises; Recruitment/HR, Marketing and experience of governing church schools.

Trustees are also required to state at each meeting any conflicts of interest in regards to Trust business. With the exception of the Chief Executive Officer who can be an employee and trustee, staff of Pickwick Academy Trust may not be trustees.

### Local Governance Committees

Our Local Governance Committees (LGCs) are committees of the Trust Board and are responsible for providing support and challenge to a specific school around vision, ethos, curriculum, standards, pupil experience and promoting the Christian distinctiveness of church schools. LGCs have the best interests of the school and the local community at their heart.

The core functions of a Local Governance Committee are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school
2. Holding the Head to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
3. Providing support to monitor school expenditure

Governors need to be aware of the progress the school is making through regular reviews and discussion. They also need to be aware of the challenges that the leadership is facing and of the measures being taken to meet these challenges. Support and challenge are crucial to identify and mitigate risks and also to enable the flow of reliable information and intelligence about the school's operation and performance within Pickwick Academy Trust.

The LGC is responsible for the well-being of the Headteacher / Head of School and should actively promote a sensible work life balance for the Head and throughout the school.

Responsibility for all aspects of financial management, planning and budget monitoring is held at Trust Board level and implemented by the central team and school leaders. The LGC will receive summarised annual budget plans and regular budget monitoring reports and will provide support to monitor school expenditure in accordance with appropriate authorisations.

The LGC and Headteacher/Head of School will advise the Trust Board and central team regarding staffing provision and will make recommendations for strategic

changes to the staffing structure to address challenges.

Individual governors will be asked to take responsibility on behalf of the LGC for the oversight of key aspects of the life of the school as link governors. Each governor will work with the school and provide reports to the LGC and Trust Board on their link area.

The Trust Board and Local Governance Committees work closely together. LGC Chairs meet regularly with the Trust's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and nominated governors are invited to attend Trust Finance and School Improvement Committee meetings.

Local Governance Committees are accountable to the Trust Board and our governance processes are reviewed regularly to ensure that schools and school leaders are getting the support and challenge that they need. A schedule of training for new and existing governors is in place, as well as the opportunity to shadow experienced governors and share best practice.

Good governance in all types of schools is characterised by a focus on six core strategic functions:

1. **Strategic leadership** that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
2. **Accountability** that drives up educational standards
3. **People** with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
4. **Structures** that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
5. **Compliance** with statutory and contractual requirements.
6. **Evaluation** to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

