



Symphony Learning
TRUST

Lead Finance and Health and Safety LGB Roles

Adopted by Symphony Learning Trust on	10 th October 2023
Next Review Due	Change of regulations

- **Trustee/Governor Roles2**
- **Financial Lead Trustee/Governor role2**
- **Health and Safety Lead Governor role3**
- **Health and Safety Governor visits / monitoring role4**
- **Procedure for Governor Visits4**

 **Trustee/Governor Roles**

With the recent requirement for the Trust Board and LGBs to have a named Lead Finance Governor and a Lead Health and Safety Governor, the following provides a brief description for these roles and also expectations for the Health & Safety Governor monitoring visits;

 **Financial Lead Trustee/Governor role**

Role

The governing body has responsibility for ‘overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent, a balanced budget is maintained, reasons for deficits and excessive surpluses are challenged’. The budget is then presented to the Trustees for approval and if any further queries arises, will be queried with the SBM and/or Head

As part of this process each LGB and Trust Board, should appoint at least one lead finance trustee/governor, who has specific skills and experience of financial matters and undertakes training and development to ensure knowledge is maintained.

The governing body recognises that it is accountable for the way in which resources are used and it is committed to carrying out this responsibility honestly, transparently and with integrity. The lead finance governor has delegated responsibility from the governing body to fulfil the responsibilities of the governing body. The lead finance trustee has delegated responsibility from the trust board body to fulfil the responsibilities of the trust board.

Key Tasks

The trust board/governing body will ensure the principles of Best Value and Finance Policy is followed when making decisions, at trust board or school level respectively

- Finance governors to scrutinise and recommend the formal budget plan(s) for the financial year and make recommendations to the Trustees for approval.

- Ensure the continued knowledge and understanding of governors in respect of the requirements of the Finance Policy.
- Ensure maintenance of an up to date three-year financial plan and current data is used to inform the three-year plan.
- Monitor budgets for all funds under the governing bodies control, including requirement decisions, at least termly and to report significant variances from the anticipated position to the governing body.
- Monitor income and expenditure, cashflow and reserves.
- Ensure traded services, e.g. Catering, Pre-school, Breakfast and After School Care are breaking even and not in deficit.
- Approve school service level agreements and service contracts that require LGB approval.
- Monitor school performance indicators and key ratios and other non-financial data affecting budgets, directing action as appropriate.
- Receive audit reports and refer key issues to the governing board and direct the response to such reports and ensure such reports are appropriately acted upon.
- Monitor the proper allocation of pupil premium and sports funding.
- Admission numbers are aligned to staffing and a balanced budget is presented.
- Trust Board level the budgets are approved.



Health and Safety Lead Governor role

Role

Your role as the health and safety governor means that you should take a special interest in health and safety issues and help ensure that they remain high on the governing body's agenda. Generally, the Headteacher (together with the Business Manager) will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the school's health and safety policy and the communication of its requirements.

Key Tasks

- Work with the school to conduct health and safety 'walkabout' inspections of the school premises
- Keep up to date with current legislation relating to health and safety matters received in school or other publications;
- Attend appropriate training if required
- Assist in monitoring health and safety policies and procedures provided by the Trust
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are carried out as set out in health and safety policy, that these are reviewed annually and suitable procedures put in place to manage risks;
- Together with the Headteacher and Business Manager, keep the governing body informed of any health and safety issues through regular reports, covering accident statistics, results of health and safety checks etc
- Ensure the annual health and safety audit is carried out as required and appropriate action taken where required;

- Be aware of health and safety implications of matters under consideration by governing body and ensure these are understood before a decision is taken.;

Health and Safety Governor visits / monitoring role

The purpose of the visit is not to **inspect** the school but to monitor that school finance policy is reflected in school practice.

Visiting the school is an important aspect of governors' work. To be really effective and fully involved, governors must get to know the school. This means visiting the school to meet and talk to pupils and staff, to get a feel for how things work. In this way governors will:

- Learn more about their roles and give meaning to work undertaken in governing body and committee meetings
- Build relationships with pupils and staff by getting to know them and the challenges they face
- Be better equipped to carry out their important monitoring and evaluation role

It is important to develop a culture in school that encourages and supports governor visits since in certain circumstances, visits may become potentially stressful for both staff and governors.

Recognising tensions, being explicit about purpose, and building trusting and professional relationships are the key to ensuring that visits are valuable experience for all concerned.

Governors need to know what is happening in the school by addressing the following questions and concepts:

- How successful are the policies?
- If for a subject visit, governors need to scrutinise the methodology of the subject in question □ Are targets for improvements being met?
- What are the key issues facing staff?
- What are the problems and how can staff be supported?

Procedure for Governor Visits

Planning

- A schedule of visits is agreed annually — the schedule is linked to key priorities in the Core or Subject Plans and aims to take account of the needs of new governors, new initiatives and the four year rolling programme for curriculum development
- Visits must have a clear purpose.

Before the Visit (if appropriate)

Meeting with the Subject Coordinator/Management Team:-

- Discuss an agenda/timetable for the observations.
- Discuss the subject policy documents (if applicable) and any supporting curriculum documentation □ Agree how you will be introduced.
- Be positive, friendly and encouraging

During the Visit

- Make sure that you arrive on time
- On arrival remember to follow the school's security procedures
- Make sure the head knows that you are on site
- Remember that you are **not** inspecting the school – governors should not comment on their perceived quality of teaching as this is for Symphony staff and Ofsted to pass judgement on
- Remember that the school is a workplace for lots of people
- Remember that you are there to learn
- Stick to the purpose of your visit
- Avoid getting drawn in to any discussion on personal or general staff grievances
- Look relaxed, get involved and blend in
- Observe discreetly; remember that note taking is disconcerting for everyone
- Talk to staff and pupils, show interest and enthusiasm
- When appropriate ask questions and discuss **impact** of the school's approach, be courteous, but not critical
- Keep an open mind, be flexible and 'go with the flow'
- Look for opportunities to give praise

After the Visit

- Thank staff for hosting your visit
- Discuss what was observed with the member of staff
- Allow staff to explain and check out understandings
- Ask for explanations on anything about which you are unsure
- Be positive, friendly and encouraging
- Make your notes as soon as possible whilst observations are still fresh in your mind
- If appropriate, discuss your observations with the Head/Head of Department
- Agree arrangements for any follow up visits
- Reflect on what you have seen and how this connects to the priorities of the school.

Reporting Back to the Governing Body

- Complete the relevant **Symphony governor visit pro-forma (available from your school's Headteacher)** and send to staff a copy of the draft for comments

- Be prepared to amend your report in the light of comments; again, comments on perceived quality of lessons will not form part of a report
- Ensure that the Head Teacher receives an agreed copy of the report in good time for distribution for the next Full Governors' Meeting.

10 October 2023