



Governance Handbook

2021-22
(6th Edition)

Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) – Governance Philosophy

Governance leadership is Strategic leadership. It:

- Sets vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Delivers accountability
- Ensures that every decision made and every pound spent puts children first.

The Garden Analogy:

- Consider a fence separating your garden from your neighbour's. Your neighbour plants some bulbs
- You can lean over the fence and ask why those particular bulbs, in that particular place, at that particular time of year, the effect those bulbs will have on the rest of the plants in the garden, how much they cost and were they value for money
- You cannot jump over the fence, dig up the bulbs, plant different ones, rearrange them, dump other seeds on top of them, or pile a bunch of horse manure on top in order to 'helpfully' make them grow better
- The fence is the dividing line between strategic and operational.

Governance Handbook

2021-22

Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST)

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From the CEO...

Welcome

You are most welcome to the Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST). BEST comprises ten flourishing academies on ten different sites, delivering first choice education to over 5 000 pupils, from Early Years to Advanced Level Study. This provision is augmented by five BEST Nurseries and enriched by BEST Central, Educational and Financial Services. At the heart of BEST, is BEST House. This multi-agency Leadership and Governance Development Centre is part of BEST Charities.

Governance is through the Board of Trustees (the 'Board') and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Board is responsible for the effective operation of BEST and each academy therein. LGBs are committees of the Board. Each LGB operates to both support and hold the Principal to account for the performance of pupils and staff and to engage meaningfully with all parents/carers, enabling them to put forward their views at key points in their child's education.

Thank you

Thank you for volunteering to be a Governor. It is a terrifically rewarding and highly demanding role. Only the best educational standards are acceptable. As a Governor, you will gain skills appropriate to the scale and nature of the task; set the highest expectations and tackle any signs of underperformance; and help to ensure that all pupils strive to be the best they can be and are well prepared for life.

The purpose of this handbook is twofold. Firstly, it outlines the core role and functions of the Board and the LGBs. Secondly, it provides a point of reference on all the legal duties of Governors, signposting to more detailed information, guidance and resources.¹ The handbook is rooted in the belief that good governance is essential to the success of any organisation and that the aim of governance within BEST is to ensure our mission is achieved by:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The handbook, now in its sixth edition, will be kept under review and updated to reflect feedback from the BEST community, the law affecting Governance and changes to education policy. This is an ongoing process.

I wish you every success and much enjoyment in your service to our pupils, staff and academies.



Dr Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer
& National Leader of Education

Date Adopted:	September 2021	Review Date:	Summer 2022
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¹This handbook should read in conjunction with: the 'Memorandum and Articles of Association', accessed at www.bestacademies.org.uk/legal;

'Governance Handbook', accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook/governance-handbook>;

'School Inspection Handbook' accessed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook;

'Academies Financial Handbook' accessed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook. A copy of each is provided in Governor Hub.

BEST: Mission, Vision, Values and Operating Principles

BEST

BEST is the legal entity responsible for the governance of all academies within the Trust. BEST shall have regard to (but for the avoidance of doubt shall not be bound by) any guidance as to the governance of academies that the Secretary of State may publish to the extent permitted by the governing documents.

The object of BEST is to advance education for the public benefit in the United Kingdom. This is achieved by establishing, maintaining, managing and developing academies. The academies will offer high quality education and collaborate and compete with each other to continually raise standards and best serve the wider community.

We believe in lean, focused and impactful governance. Leaders are empowered through a high autonomy and high accountability culture that **always puts children first**.

BEST Mission Statement

- to grow the BEST in everyone -

We believe in the importance of high expectations, hard work and the development of a community of academies where each of us strive to **'be the best that we can be'**.

BEST Vision Statement

BEST aims to:

1. Grow to comprise twelve schools and eight nurseries, with a SCITT offer. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure will be in place
2. Ensure all schools achieve a minimum Ofsted inspection Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile
3. Secure financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year and a minimum 5% of GAG in reserves.

BEST Values – We will:

Always put Children first

Our reference point question is 'how will this improve outcomes for children and enable them to go on and succeed in life?'

Collaborate to support and compete to challenge

Our academies work together to add value and compete to improve continually

Provide community-based education

Our academies form a coherent learning community at the heart of the Bedfordshire community

Have the courage to be compassionate

Our community treats all with trust, kindness and honesty

BEST Operating Principles – We will:

Deliver BEST outcomes

Outcomes will be in the top 20% nationally

Provide BEST opportunities

An extensive range of opportunities beyond the classroom will be provided to develop the whole person

Nurture talent

Our responsibility is to invest in our people and bring out the BEST in everyone

Operate a high autonomy, high accountability culture

Professionals will lead our system and take responsibility to continually raise standards

Lead through service

Leaders and followers will work together with mutual respect and shared responsibility

Members

Members have ultimate responsibility for BEST achieving its charitable objectives. They oversee and hold the Trustees to account for the governance arrangements of the Trust. The Members agree the Articles of Association and have the power to appoint and remove Trustees. They comprise:

- one person appointed by BEST
- the Chairperson of the Trustees
- any person appointed under Article 15A.

Members receive copies of the Governance Handbook for comment. Through Governor Hub, they have access to agenda items and minutes for all meetings of the Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). Members meet twice a year. Firstly, to receive and approve BEST's Strategic Plan. Secondly, to receive and approve BEST's Financial Statements.

Members are bound by the undertakings contained in Article 8²

Reserved Matters

- To change the name of the Academy Trust
- To determine BEST's Mission Statement
- To change the Objects of the Academy Trust
- To change the structure of the BEST Board
- To amend the Articles of Association
- To pass a resolution to wind up the Academy Trust
- To appoint the auditors.

² DFE 2016 P16

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the effective operation of BEST and each academy therein. It provides ongoing challenge and support to the executive team and to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Board of Trustees meets six times per year plus any extraordinary meetings. Each Trustee receives a single vote.

The Board fulfils the following core functions through delegation of its powers to the CEO:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of BEST and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the BEST and making sure its money is well spent.

The Board of Trustees currently comprises seven members, including the CEO. Future trustees may be appointed or elected under BEST's Articles. These latter set out the operation of the Board.

Key Responsibilities

Vision, Strategy and Strategic Objectives

- Set BEST's vision, strategy and strategic objectives
- Support and challenge to the executive
- Regular engagement with all key stakeholders

Governance (Members/Trustees) – Executive Lead – Alan Lee

- Review and amend as necessary: the Articles of Association and BEST Governance Handbook
- Monitor the members of the Board (inc: recruitment, review, recruitment and succession planning)
- Determine BEST-wide and academy-specific policies in line with BEST's aligned autonomy model
- Overall accountability for compliance and the management of risk in accordance with BEST's Articles of Association, Funding Agreement, Academies Financial Handbook and all statutory regulations
- Appointment/removal of the CEO and all members of the LGB.³

Quality of Education (including outcomes) – Executive Lead – Alison Wilshaw

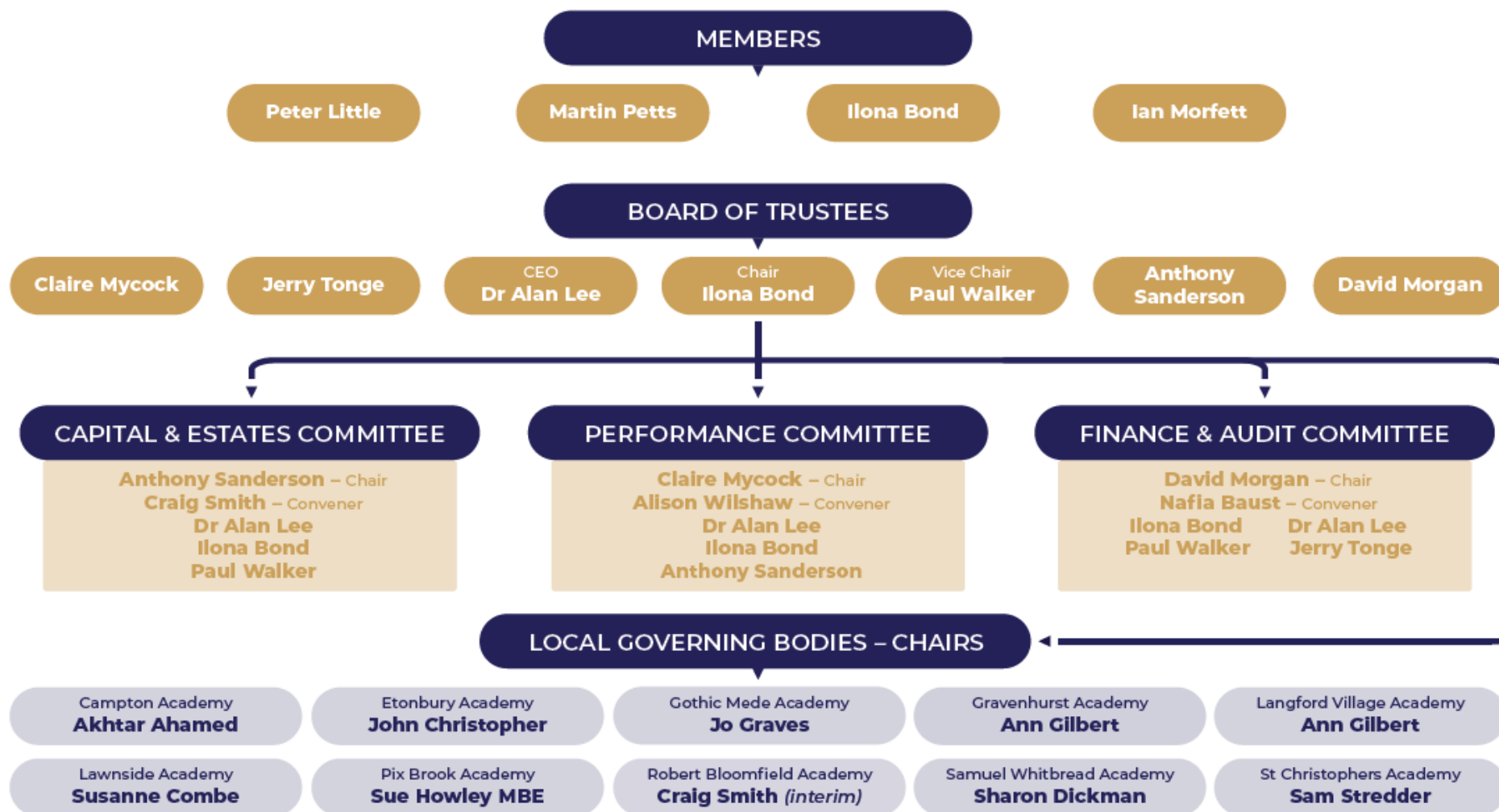
- Accountability for the performance and standards of all BEST academies, including: pupil outcomes; standard of educational provision; pupil wellbeing; and, the quality of teaching
- To appoint, receive reports from and monitor the Performance Committee, ensuring challenge and support to the executive – Director of Education – over progress against BEST's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Ensure the continuing growth and success of both the BEST Improvement Team and BEST SCITT, providing a full suite of CPD/leadership opportunities for all staff, as well as ensuring a healthy supply of NQTs to BEST
- To determine the BEST-wide curriculum policy to ensure provision of a broad and balanced education for all pupils and best value.

³ In extreme circumstances, the Board of Trustees reserves the right to remove a local governing body where there are concerns over its effectiveness/promotion of BEST's vision and replace it with an Interim Executive Board (IEB).

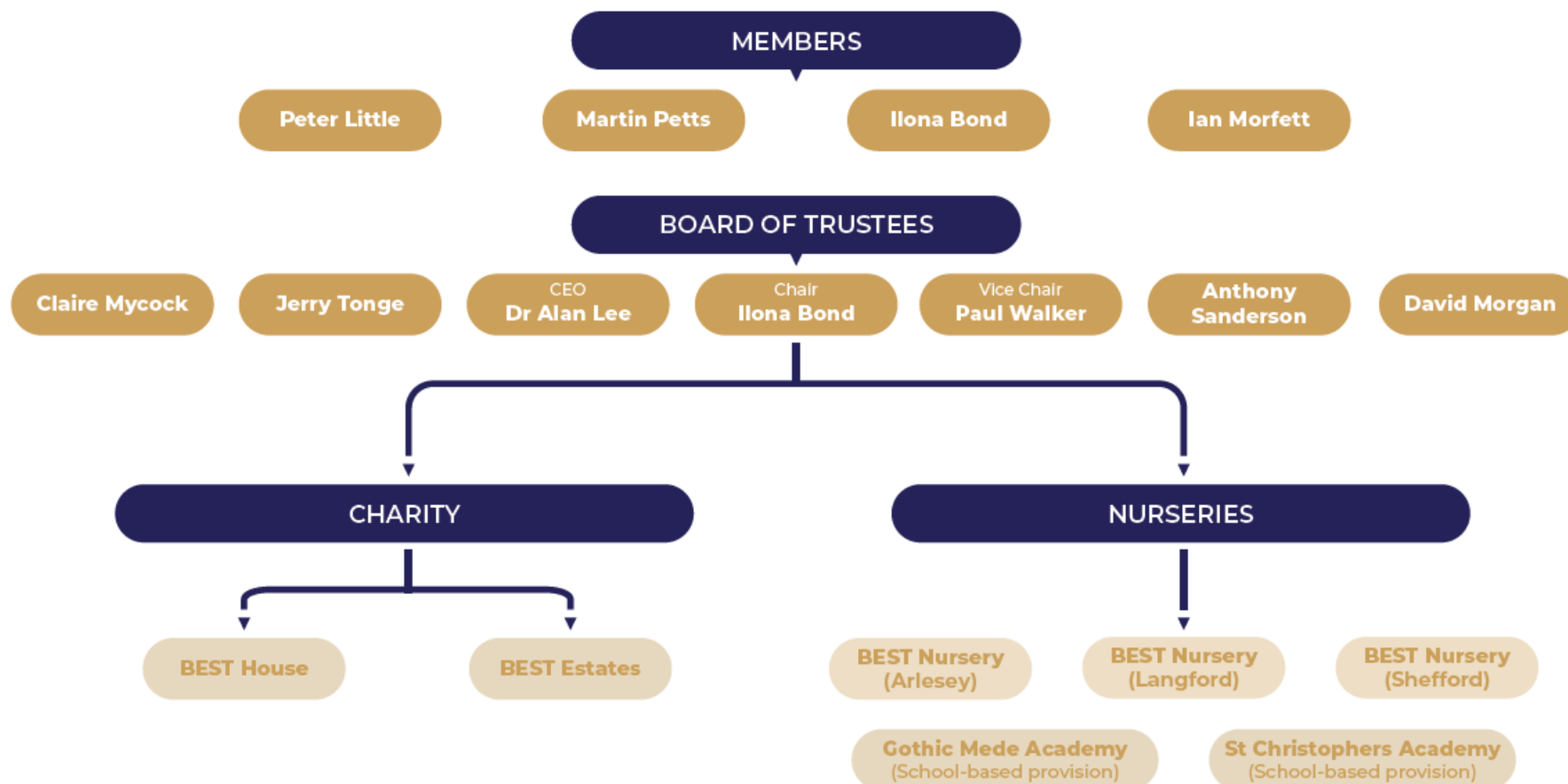
Finance – Executive Lead – Nafia Baust
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish and review BEST’s Financial Scheme of Delegation • Appointment of internal auditors and make recommendation to Members on external audits • Approval and submission of BEST’s annual report and accounts, signed statement on regularity, probity and compliance, incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money • Ensuring financial controls so there is regularity, probity and value for money in relation to the management of public funds • To establish financial policies, including charging and remissions, staff expenses, procurement, etc. and review periodically • Approval of BEST’s funding model (including the top slice) and financial strategy • To appoint, receive reports from and monitor the performance of the Finance and Audit Committee • To appoint an Accounting Officer • To maintain a register of relevant personal and business interests.
Staff and HR – Executive Lead – Craig Smith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake the performance management of the CEO and support that of all the Principals⁴ • Approval of BEST’s Governance and Operations structures • To review and agree BEST-wide HR policies, including staff well-being, appraisal and pay progression.
Estates/other – Executive Lead – Craig Smith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a central property asset register, including asset evaluation • Maintain a central property conditions database, delivering capital improvement projects • Ensure compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, fire and asbestos risk assessments • Ensure best value through effective procurement processes and contract assessment (Inc.: educational, commercial and contractual legal advice).
Reserved Matters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the names of the Academies • Determine the mission, vision (inc: structure), values and operating principles of the Academies • Agree a BEST-wide Admissions Policy • Adopt or alter the constitution and terms of reference of any committee of the BEST board • Establish a trading company.

⁴ In the extreme circumstance of a Principal not achieving their performance management targets, responsibility for performance management of all staff at the academy concerned will be assumed by the Director of Education until the matter is resolved.

GOVERNANCE – ACADEMIES



GOVERNANCE – SUBSIDIARIES



Standing Committees of the Board	
Performance Committee – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exercise the powers of the Board of Trustees in respect of holding the BEST senior executives to account (i.e. Director of Education and CEO) for all aspects of academy performance and standards ○ Scrutinise the rationale for identifying strategic priorities, the accuracy of academy level and BEST-level data analysis, the clarity of purpose and speed of impact in addressing areas of underperformance or risk ○ Identify strong practice or innovation and promote its wider dissemination. 	
Finance and Audit Committee – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that the Board is fully aware of BEST’s financial position and how this may change in the foreseeable future ○ Provide assurances that key enabling resources are optimised and aligned with BEST’s strategic aims and objectives ○ Gain assurance on the effectiveness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Financial planning, budget-setting, performance analysis and financial reporting ➤ Estates investments and management planning ➤ Procurement processes and outcomes ○ Maintain an up-to-date risk register, regularly interrogating the risks and mitigations associated with BEST’s strategic priorities. 	
Capital and Estates Committee – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure capital and estates priorities are consistent with Trust growth and strategic developments ○ Ensure that the Board is fully aware of all aspects of the strategic management of the estate ○ Oversight of the use of Capital Funds to ensure the estate is maintained, in order to meet the Trust’s current and future education needs and creates a suitable environment that enhances both staff and pupil experience ○ Ensure that all buildings across the estate provide safe and fit for purpose accommodation that meets statutory requirements. 	
Subsidiaries (Nurseries) Executive Committee – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables children and staff to excel ○ Hold the Nursery Managers to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to deliver care and progress are followed ○ Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value and sustainability. 	
Subsidiaries (Charity) Executive Committee – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure the Charity fulfils its aims and objectives ○ Oversight of BEST House management and strategic direction ○ Ensure legal responsibilities are fulfilled. 	
Local Governing Bodies – Key Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables pupils and staff to excel ○ Hold the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which a minimum expectation for all pupils of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20% is strictly followed ○ Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value. 	

Chief Executive Officer
Objectives
<p>The CEO is appointed by the Board of Trustees to fulfil the following delegated objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the guiding values of BEST are faithfully upheld, revisited and reinforced • To provide executive leadership • To ensure the highest standards in every BEST academy • To act as the Accounting Officer for BEST • To ensure the Board of Trustees is appropriately informed through agreed mechanisms.
Key Responsibilities
The CEO will be accountable to the Board for:
Vision, values and operating principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that BEST's vision, values and operating principles (VVO) are clearly communicated and adhered to • Liaising with the Department for Education (DofE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) and Charities Commission (CC) to ensure that BEST's governance is clear, compliant and effective.
Executive Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and performance managing the executive leadership team that includes the Chief Operations Officer (COO), Chief Finance Officer (CFO), Director of Education (DofE) and Principals • Developing an operating model and staffing structure that delivers all the necessary functions of BEST effectively, efficiently and affordably.
Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards in every BEST academy, ensuring that outcomes in all BEST academies achieve the minimum expectation of the 50th percentile and that all academies achieve at least an Ofsted 'Good' category • Ensuring robust quality assurance processes are in place at each academy and that LGBs carry out their duties effectively • Provide the Board with Safeguarding audits/reports to ensure that appropriate checks and balances are in place at all levels within BEST • Provide oversight of the implementation of the BEST-wide curriculum policy.
Accounting Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personally responsible to Parliament and to the EFSA's accounting officer, for the financial resources under BEST's control • Ensuring high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly with regard to value for money, regularity and propriety.
Board of Trustees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining the governance structures for BEST and governance scheme of delegation • Ensuring that the Board and their sub-committees have access to all necessary data and information; complete skills audits and receive appropriate training; and, are fully supported in carrying out their work.

Chief Operations Officer
Objectives
<p>The COO is appointed by the CEO in consultation with the Board of Trustees to fulfil the following delegated objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop, implement and communicate a BEST Growth Strategy and approach • To improve Governance across the Trust • To ensure Central Services are providing high quality and value for money support to academies • To ensure the Trust has highly effective systems for operational effectiveness and compliance • To deputise for the CEO.
Key Responsibilities
The COO will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:
Growing and Developing BEST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with internal stakeholders and external partners to deliver and communicate BEST's vision of ten schools and five nurseries, within a primary-secondary education model • the integration of new academies into the Trust • leading relationships with funders, decision makers and influencers over local and national plans for educational structure and estates developments.
Improving Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing effective governance across the Trust, particularly at LGB level • developing appropriate training and support for governance • leading on accreditation and national benchmarks such as NLGs and Governor Mark.
Effective management of central services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring core functions such as HR, IT support, marketing and communications, estates and capital developments are highly effective and work to support academies • providing excellent value for money from new and existing service provision including market testing • constantly evolving to reflect and support academy needs.
Operational Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, GDPR/Data Protection and HR • monitoring operational efficiency across all areas of operational control and seeking service improvements • seeking sources of external support and funding to improve effectiveness and capacity.
Deputising for CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to take on extra responsibilities as appropriate and delegated by the CEO • to represent the Trust externally • to attend activities as the CEO and/or Trusts representative and uphold the highest standards for the Trust.

Chief Finance Officer
Objectives
<p>The CFO is appointed by CEO in consultation with the Board of Trustees to fulfil the following delegated objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the highest standards of financial management • To ensure public funds are used as intended by Parliament • To ensure rigorous procedures for preparing and monitoring financial plans • To ensure appropriate financial arrangements operate day to day • To ensure effective internal controls • To ensure the Accounting Officer and Board of Trustees are appropriately informed through agreed mechanisms.
Key Responsibilities
<p>The CFO will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:</p>
Effective deployment of financial resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure financial sustainability and sufficient reserves – minimum 5% of GAG funding – to support 2 tier changes and school improvement initiatives/projects • Ensure financial planning establishes sustainability of the Trust through accurate budgeting, forward planning and regular monitoring • To liaise with the Trust's appointed auditors and ensure the preparation of statutory accounts • Ensure the Trust is able to meet short term financial obligations • Ensure financial systems in place provide efficient integrated processes • Providing professional advice and support to staff/LGBs/Trustees.
Compliance and reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with external statutory regulations – Companies Act, Charities Act, HMRC, DfE, ESFA • External audit – maintain accurate accounting records and prepare an annual report and financial statements • Internal audit – delivering assurance that the Trust's financial systems, controls, transactions and risks are sound and implemented • Monthly management reporting to the Principals, Accounting Officer and members of the Finance and Audit Committee • Attend and report to the Finance and Audit Committee on matters of probity and potential risk • Financial management reports for Trustees board meetings.
Managing central and local finance staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing leadership and technical expertise • Line managing central finance team • Directing and providing support and training for local finance staff.

Director of Education	
Objectives	
<p>The DofE is appointed by CEO in consultation with the Board of Trustees to fulfil the following delegated objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide strategic leadership, clear direction and effective management for educational performance, standards and effectiveness (inc: staffing structures) across all BEST academies To develop BEST-wide strategies (inc: curriculum) and procedures for improving outcomes for all pupils in BEST academies To lead, develop and grow the BEST Improvement team, supporting our own schools and schools across CBC. 	
Key Responsibilities	
The DofE will be accountable to the CEO and the Board for:	
Providing strategic leadership for educational performance, standards and effectiveness across all BEST academies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deliver and communicate BEST's vision of all schools achieving a minimum Ofsted inspection Good grade, with outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile To create an environment where staff are supported and challenged so that high performance is the norm and well-being is promoted To continue to improve and develop the BEST performance culture, analysing trends and developing interventions to raise standards and pursue excellence in all areas of academy performance To monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across BEST and liaise with appropriate Senior Leaders to ensure development areas are addressed appropriately and expediently. 	
Developing BEST-wide strategies and procedures for improving outcomes for all pupils in BEST academies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a range of effective quality assurance mechanisms and compliance systems which lead to continued improvement across BEST To ensure a consistent and continuous focus on student achievement, using data to track and monitor the progress in every pupil's learning, and across BEST, analysing academy data and alerting the Principal and CEO to any underperformance To develop a BEST approach to academy review including the organisation of whole academy (inc: staffing structures and curriculum), subject and aspect reviews in conjunction with Principals. 	
Leading, developing and growing BEST Education Services and School Improvement team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To lead and manage BEST Education Services and School Improvement Team, ensuring strategic focus and high outcomes To keep up to date with major developments and changes in education and develop specific expertise within the Trust as required, weaving this into succession planning in each academy and across the Trust To produce a Growth Plan for the BEST School Improvement Team, annually. 	

Local Governing Bodies

The Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) are committees of the Board. It is the role of the LGBs to support and strengthen their Principal's leadership through robust challenge.

The core functions of the LGB are:

- ensuring the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld and clearly communicated, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables pupils and staff to excel
- holding the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which a **minimum expectation for all pupils of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20%** is strictly followed
- monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value.

Key Responsibilities

Vision, Strategy and Strategic Objectives – Executive Lead – Alan Lee

- Champion BEST's vision and values throughout the academy and wider community, nurturing a culture of consistent high expectations from all
- Support, monitor and challenge the Principal against targets set by BEST for the academy
- Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.

Governance (LGBs)^{5 6} – Executive Lead – Craig Smith

- Chair will provide reports and updates to the BEST Board as required, with a minimum annual report
- Maintain a clear and up to date record of all LGB members, notifying BEST of the need to recruit new governors
- Appoint from its number local governors with specific link responsibilities (e.g. safeguarding, pupil premium etc.)
- Conduct annual self-effectiveness/skills audit reviews to identify training requirements and ensure robust governance at academy-level.

Finance – Executive Lead – Nafia Baust

- Monitor the use of resources to ensure best value, ensure that robust curriculum-led financial planning is in place and adequate contingency and reserves are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning.
- Ensuring appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium, SEND and sports premium funding
- Maintain a register of business and personal interests.

Staff and HR – Executive Lead – Craig Smith

- Support with the appointment/appraisal of the academy Principal
- Ensuring an appropriate costed staffing structure is in place and that high quality CPD aligned to the curriculum is made available to staff
- Ensuring compliance with BEST HR policies, taking into account the workload and well-being of staff
- Holding senior leaders to account against academy targets.

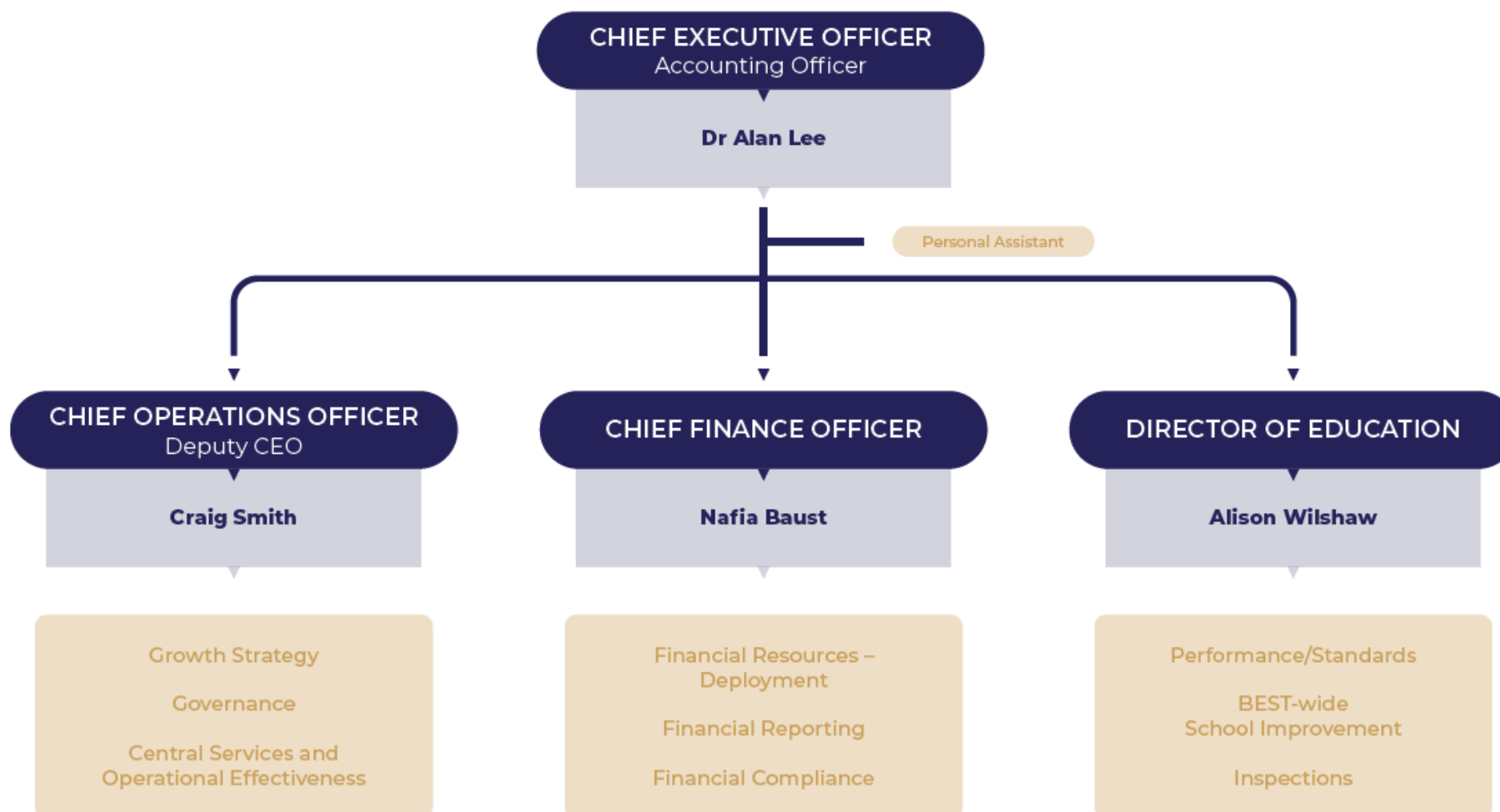
Quality of Education – Executive Lead – Alison Wilshaw

- Involvement in the construction/approval of both the Academy Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation documents
- Ensuring the curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the academy
- Monitor the performance of the academic with particular respect to the progress and attainment of individuals and Groups (including the most disadvantaged and SEND), pupil well-being and staff appraisal.

⁵ All LGB members, including the Chair and Vice Chair, will be appointed by BEST. The LGB must include a minimum of two elected parent representatives and may include a Principal/representative from another BEST academy, subject to agreement.

⁶ The model for LGBs contained in Appendix 12, p50 is to be employed from 2021-22. A degree of variation from this may be employed following approval from the COO.

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE CHART



Appendix 1: Scheme of Delegation

Introduction

The Scheme of Delegation (known as ‘Scheme’ hereafter) sets out the delegated powers between the different bodies involved in the governance and operation of the Bedfordshire Schools of Trust (BEST). The different bodies include:

- a. Members
- b. Board of Trustees
- c. Board Sub-Committees
- d. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Accounting Officer
- e. Chief Operations Officer (COO)
- f. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)
- g. Principals (Ps).

The delegated powers are broken down into different levels in line with BEST’s principles of governance, leadership and operations. The delegated autonomy for individual schools is aligned with the need for BEST to fulfil its charitable and corporate responsibilities to the Department for Education (DfE), Education Skills Funding Agency (EFSA), Charities Commission, HMRC and Companies House.

The different levels of delegated power are listed as:

- a. R = Responsible
- b. A = Accountable
- c. C = Consulted
- d. S = Support
- e. I = Informed⁷

The Scheme should be read in conjunction with:

- a. the Terms of Reference for the relevant body
- b. the Job Roles for the positions referenced
- c. Financial Scheme of Delegation
- d. BEST Policy Cycle
- e. BEST Quality Assurance Calendar.

⁷ In cases where delegated powers sit with more than one body, reading below left to right, the first mentioned body has seniority.

1. Scheme of Delegation

1. Vision, strategy and strategic objectives. Executive Lead: Alan Lee

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
1.1	Setting BEST's vision, strategy and strategic objectives (BEST Improvement Plan, in the agreed format)		A	C	R	S	S	S
1.2	Championing BEST's vision, values and strategic objectives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
1.3	Regular engagement with key (internal) stakeholders	A	I	I	S	R	S	S
1.4	Setting school vision, strategy and strategic objectives (School Improvement Plan, in the agreed format)		A	I	S	S	A	R
1.5	Regular engagement with the school ⁸ community	A	I	I	S	S	A	R
1.6	Lead on BEST's Communications (inc: Public Relations) Strategy		A	C	C	R	S	S
1.7	Lead on the school's Communications (inc: Public Relations) Strategy, aligned to BEST's vision and values		A	I	S	A	A	R
1.8	Determine the scope of shared services to be delivered by BEST		A	C	R	C	I	C
1.9	Consider requests from schools to join BEST, leading on due diligence processes as required		A	C	R	C	I	I
1.10	Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and students		A	S	R	S	A	R
1.11	Set and approve amendments to BEST's admissions policy		A/R	I	S	S	S	S

⁸ In all cases, the term 'school' also includes 'nursery'.

2. Scheme of Delegation

2. Governance. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
2.1	Board member monitoring (inc: provision of training, support, recruitment and succession planning)		A	I	R	S	S	S
2.2	LGB member monitoring (inc: provision of training, support, recruitment and succession planning)		A	I	S	R	A	S
2.3	Annual 360 review of Chair of Trustees		A	I	R	S	S	S
2.4	Annual 360 review of Chair of LGBs		A	I	S	R	A	S
2.5	Provide reports and updates to the Board, including annual report		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.6	Members: appoint/remove	A	I	I	I	I	I	I
2.7	Trustees: appoint/remove	A	R	C	C	I	I	I
2.8	LGB Chair: appoint/remove		R	I	C	S	I	I
2.9	LGB Members: appoint/remove		R	I	C	S	C	C
2.10	Clerk to Trustees: appoint/remove		C	C	R	C	I	I
2.11	Clerk to LGBs: appoint/remove		I	I	C	C	C	R
2.12	Maintain a clear and up to date record of all LGB members, their terms of office and notifying BEST of the need to recruit new governors		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.13	Conduct annual skills audit to identify training needs		A	I	I	S	R	C
2.14	Articles of Association: review/agree	A	R	C	C	C	I	I
2.15	Governance Handbook (inc: Scheme of Delegation): review/agree		A	C	R	C	C	C
2.16	Governance structure for BEST: establish and review		A	C	R	S	S	S
2.17	Determine BEST-wide and school specific policies, in line with BEST's aligned autonomy model		A	S	R	C	S	C
2.18	Monitor compliance with statutory regulations and BEST's policies ⁹		A	S	R	R	S	S
2.19	Auditing and reporting against matters of compliance		A	C	R	R	I	I

⁹ Education Policies rest with the CEO and non-education with the COO.

3. Scheme of Delegation

3. Quality of Education (inc: outcomes). Executive Lead: Alison Wilshaw

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
3.1	Evaluate and report on progress against BEST's strategic priorities		A	A	R	S	S	I
3.2	Present up to date: school self-evaluation, school improvement plans, curriculum led finance models and staffing structures		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.3	Agree, monitor and report on progress against BEST-wide key outcome targets for all students ¹⁰		A	A	R	S	S	S
3.4	Report on progress against targets set in the school SEF		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.5	Agree, monitor and report on progress against school outcomes targets for all students		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.6	Discharge duties in respect of students with SEND		A	A	I	S	A	R
3.7	Provision of student and staff well-being programmes throughout the academic year		A	A	S	S	A	R
3.8	Ensure a BEST-wide Safeguarding structure is in place, with designated Safeguard Trustee, policy framework and annual external audits for all schools		A	A	R	C	I	I
3.9	Provide a full suite of CPD and leadership opportunities through the BEST School Improvement Team		A	A	R	C	S	S
3.10	Ensure the continuing growth and success of the BEST School Improvement Team		A	A	R	C	S	C
3.11	Provide Primary and Secondary Initial Teacher Training opportunities through the BEST SCITT		A	A	R	C	S	C
3.12	Determine that a school should be a BEST Cause for Concern		A	A	R	C	I	I

¹⁰ All students includes the most disadvantaged, the most able and SEND

4. Scheme of Delegation

4. Finance. Executive Lead: Nafia Baust

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
4.1	Establish and review the Financial Scheme of Delegation		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.2	External auditors: appoint/remove	R	A	A	S	I	I	I
4.3	Agree BEST funding model and financial strategy to support delivery of key priorities		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.4	Agree budget plan to support delivery of school key priorities		A	A	R	S	I	C
4.5	Review and approve BEST-wide procurement strategies		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.6	Receive and respond to external auditors' report		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.7	Submit annual report and accounts, including accounting policies, signed statement of regularity, propriety and compliance incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money		A	A	R	I	I	I
4.8	Approval of strategies for ensuring financial control, regularity and probity in spend of public funds		A	A	R	S	I	I
4.9	Plan manage and monitor monthly expenditure and financial reports, and identify actual or potential items of budget overspend/underspend		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.10	Monitor the use of resources to ensure best value, ensuring that robust curriculum-led financial planning is in place and adequate contingency and reserves – 5% of GAG funding – are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.11	Ensure appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium, SEND and sport premium funding		A	A	C	I	A	R
4.12	Maintain a school-based register of business and personal interest		A	A	C	I	A	R

5. Scheme of Delegation

5. Staff and HR. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
5.1	CEO: appoint/remove		A	A	I	I	I	I
5.2	CEO: appraisal/pay		A	A	I	I	I	I
5.3	COO: appoint/remove		A	A	R	I	I	I
5.4	COO: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	I	I	I
5.5	Central Team: appoint/remove		A	A	R	C	I	I
5.6	Central Team: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	C	I	I
5.7	Central Team: CPD/wellbeing		A	S	C	R	I	I
5.8	Principal: appoint/remove		A	A	R	C	S	I
5.9	Principal: appraisal/pay		A	A	R	I	S	I
5.10	Principal: CPD/wellbeing		A	S	R	C	S	S
5.11	School staff: appoint/remove		A	I	I	I	C	R
5.12	School staff: appraisal/pay		A	I	I	I	C	R
5.13	School staff: CPD/wellbeing		A	I	I	S	C	R
5.14	Agree terms and conditions of employment		A	A	R	C	I	C
5.15	Agree BEST staffing structure		A	A	R	C	I	C
5.16	Agree school staffing structure		A	I	C	S	A	R
5.17	Review and agree BEST-wide HR Policies, including staff appraisal and pay progression		A	A	R	C	C	C
5.18	Lead negotiations with Trade Unions on the development of consistent HR policies and procedural changes		A	A	C	R	S	S

6. Scheme of Delegation

6. Estates. Executive Lead: Craig Smith

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
6.1	Maintain a central property asset register, including asset evaluation		A	A	S	R	S	S
6.2	Maintain a central property conditions database, delivering capital improvement projects, in line with the agreed methodology utilising the Schools Condition Allocation (SCA)		A	A	S	R	S	S
6.3	Maintain school premises for routine condition, repair and decorating utilising the school budget and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)		A	A	S	S	S	R
6.4	Ensure compliance with all appropriate statutory functions e.g. Health and Safety, fire and asbestos risk assessments etc.		A	A	S	R	S	R
6.5	Ensure best value through effective procurement and contract assessment (inc: educational, commercial and contractual legal advice)		A	A	C	R	I	C

7. Scheme of Delegation

7. Other. Executive Lead: Alan Lee

Ref	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Board	Standing Committees	CEO	COO	LGBs	School Principal
7.1	Responsible for handling and monitoring of complaints ¹¹		A	I	A	R	R	S
7.2	To review permanent exclusions, considering whether to uphold the Principal's decision or to direct reinstatement of excluded student		A	I	R	I	A	S
7.3	Responsible for monitoring and developing the school's links with the community, parents, carers and guardians		A	I	I	A	A	R

¹¹ All settings must notify the Trust immediately of any complaints which have been escalated to Ofsted and share a copy of all relevant reports

Standing Committees/Abbreviations

Performance Committee (as required forms a sub-committee to deal with related HR matters) Finance and Audit Committee

CEO – Chief Executive Officer (and Accounting Officer)

Executive delegation to:

- a. Chief Operations Officer - Operations
- b. Chief Financial Officer – Finance¹²
- c. Director of Education – Education
- d. Clerk to the Board – Governance

COO – Chief Operating Officer

Executive delegation to:

- a. Compliance Officer – Compliance
- b. Operations Manager - Operations
- c. Communications Manager – Communications

CFO – Chief Finance Officer

Executive delegation to:

- a. Finance team – Finance

DfE – Director of Education

Executive delegation to:

- a. Director of Training and Professional Development
- b. Director of English
- c. Director of Mathematics
- d. Lead Teachers

¹² See job roles for positions referred to here.

1: Scheme of Financial Delegation	
1. Powers and Duties Reserved for the <u>Board of Trustees</u>	
General	
1.1	Approval of a written scheme of delegation of its financial powers and duties to its Finance Committee, the Chief Executive Officer, the Trust Chief Finance officer and other staff. The scheme must satisfy the Board of Trustees ultimate responsibility for ensuring that there are adequate operational controls in place for all the financial processes within the Trust. The Scheme of Delegation should be operated in conjunction with the Financial procedures and regulations of the Trust.
Budgets/Budgetary Control	
1.2	Ensure the trust's assets and funds are used only in accordance with legislation, their articles of association, their funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook
1.3	Formally approving the annual Trust budget
1.4	Considering budgetary control reports from the Finance and Audit Committee at every meeting, with relevant explanations and documentation where required
1.5	Authorisation of all virements in excess £250 000 between budget headings. Details of all virements approved and authorised by the Finance and Audit Committee are to be formally notified to the Board of Trustees
Purchasing	
1.6	Maintenance of a Register of Pecuniary and Business Interests for all Members, Trustees, Governors and Trust staff with financial responsibilities
1.7	Authorisation of the award of tenders above £250 000
Income	
1.8	Authorisation of the write off of debts not collectable (the Secretary of State's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academies Financial Handbook)
Security of Assets	
1.9	Authorisation of the disposal of individual items of equipment and materials that have become surplus to requirements, unusable or obsolete with a residual value in excess of £20 000
Accounts and Audit	
1.10	Approval of the audited financial statements
1.11	Informing the ESFA if it suspects any irregularity affecting resources.

2: Scheme of Financial Delegation

2. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Finance and Audit Committee

General

2.1	Exercising the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees in respect of the financial administration of the Trust, except for those items specifically reserved for the Board of Trustees and those delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, and other staff
2.2	Reporting on decisions taken under delegated powers to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees

Budgets/Budgetary Control

2.3	Reviewing the annual Trust budget and recommending its acceptance, or otherwise to the Board of Trustees
2.4	Considering budgetary control reports on the Trusts financial position at every meeting, taking appropriate action to contain expenditure within the budget and report to the Board of Trustees
2.5	Reviewing the virement of sums between budget heads over £100 000 and up to £250 000 as approved and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer, which are to be formally notified to the Finance and Audit Committee who shall minute the notification
2.6	Approving virements between budget headings of over £100 000 and up to £250 000
2.7	Reporting to the Board of Trustees all significant financial matters and any actual or potential overspending

Purchasing

2.8	Authorising the award of orders and contracts over £100 000 and up to £250 000
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Income

2.9	Authorisation to write off debts not collectable between £10 000 and up to £45 000 (the secretary of state's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.)
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Security of Assets

2.10	Authorising the disposal of individual items of equipment and materials that have become surplus to requirements, unusable or obsolete with a residual value above £20 000 and reporting such authorisations to the Board of Trustees
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Accounts and Audit

2.11	Reviewing the draft financial statements and external audit reports and highlighting any significant issues to the Board of Trustees
2.12	Receiving the reports of the auditor on the use of resources, systems of internal financial control, and discharge of financial responsibilities and highlighting any significant issues to the Board of Trustees
2.13	Receiving annual reports from independent auditors on our internal controls
2.14	Monitoring outcomes of any internal peer reviews that are undertaken.

3: Scheme of Financial Delegation

3. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Chief Executive Officer

General

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 3.1 | The Chief Executive Officer has delegated powers and functions in respect of internal organisation, management and control of the Trust, the implementation of all policies approved by the Board of Trustees and for the direction of teaching and the curriculum. |
|-----|---|

The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for:

Budgets/Budgetary Control

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 3.2 | Reviewing income and expenditure reports and highlighting actual or potential overspending to the Finance and Audit Committee |
| 3.3 | Approving virements between budget headings of up to £100 000 and reporting such approval to the Finance and Audit Committee |

Financial Management

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 3.4 | Ensuring the arrangements for collection of income, ordering of goods and services, payments and security of assets are in accordance with the Financial Regulations |
|-----|--|

Purchasing

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 3.5 | Authorising all orders and contracts up to £100 000 |
| 3.6 | Ensuring that all contracts and agreements conform to the Financial Regulations |

Payroll and Personnel

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 3.7 | Approval/veto of proposals and authorisation of changes to the Trust's establishment |
| 3.8 | Ensuring there is an equitable remuneration policy that recognises responsibility, skills, experience and diversity and delivers value for money to the Trust |
| 3.9 | Ensuring payroll processes are delivering timely and accurate payments to staff |

Income

- | | |
|------|---|
| 3.10 | Authorisation to write off debts not collectable up to £10 000 (the secretary of state's prior approval is also required if debts to be written off are above the value set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.) |
|------|---|

Security of Assets

- | | |
|------|--|
| 3.11 | Ensuring that there are annual independent checks of assets and the asset register |
| 3.12 | Ensuring that proper security is maintained at all times for all buildings, furniture, equipment, vehicles, stocks, stores, cash, information and records etc. under his/her control |

Accounts and Audit

- | | |
|------|---|
| 3.13 | The operation of financial processes, ensuring that adequate operational controls are in place and that the principles of internal control are maintained |
| 3.14 | Ensuring ongoing in-year QA processes are in place via independent scrutiny and internal checks. |

4: Scheme of Financial Delegation

4. Powers and Duties Reserved for the Chief Finance Officer

The CFO shall be responsible for the strategic financial planning in conjunction with the CEO and Executive Principals relating to:

Budgets/Budgetary Control

4.1	Supporting Principals with the budgeting process and presenting the annual draft budget plan for consideration and approval by the Finance and Audit Committee and Board of Trustees
4.2	Monthly monitoring of expenditure and income against the approved budget and submitting reports on the Trusts financial position to every meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee and at least 6 times a year to the Board of Trustees. Any actual or potential overspending representing a financial risk to the Trust shall be reported to the Finance and Audit Committee
4.3	Approving virements between budget headings up to a value of £100 000 and reporting such approval to the Finance and Audit Committee
4.4	Authorising requests for expenditure from reserves up to £10 000 where the amount of the request does not reduce the reserves below the required minimum of 5% of GAG Funding. All spending requests above £10 000 must be considered by the Finance and Audit Committee

Purchasing

4.5	Ensuring that the individual academies are maintaining a register of formal contracts entered into, amounts paid and certificates of completion and are retaining the quotes obtained for goods, works and services. Whilst overall responsibility for this sits with the CFO, maintenance of such records can be delegated to the COO and Local Finance Assistants
4.6	Ensuring that all correct invoices are duly certified by authorised staff before payments
4.7	Ensuring the appropriate division of duties between staff responsible for processing orders, receiving deliveries and processing payments
4.8	Authorising all orders and contracts up to £100 000

Payroll and Personnel

4.9	Authorising the monthly payroll for the central staff and for other locations if necessary
4.10	With the CEO, jointly authorising any changes to the staff structures in the individual academies
4.11	Ensuring salaries are calculated correctly and paid only to employees of the Trust
4.12	Authorising any changes in salary to existing staff after consultation with the CEO

Banking Arrangements

4.13	Maintaining proper records of accounts and reviewing monthly bank reconciliations
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Accounts and Audits

4.14	The operation of financial processes within the Trust, ensuring that adequate operational controls are in place and that the principles of internal control are maintained
4.15	Ensuring that full, accurate and up to date records are maintained in order to provide financial and statistical information
4.16	Ensuring that all records and documents are available for audit by the appointed external auditors

Insurances

4.17	Ensuring that arrangements for insurance cover are in place and adequate
4.18	Notifying the Finance and Audit Committee on any eventuality that could affect the Trust's insurance

5: Scheme of Financial Delegation

5. Powers and Duties Reserved for all Other Staff

Members of staff with delegated responsibilities should be aware that these must be exercised in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Academy Principals and Nursery Managers:

5.1	Setting their annual budget
5.2	Authorising monthly payroll, CFO can authorise in the Principals' absence
5.3	Checking and certifying monthly statements of expenditure against their delegated budgets
5.4	Reporting any errors or irregularities to the Trust CEO and CFO. Any actual or potential overspend shall also be reported to the CEO and CFO

Delegated Budget Holders:

5.5	Authorising order requisitions provided they are within the scope and remaining balance of their delegated budget
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Finance Co-ordinator

5.6	Provides support to the CFO and Finance Assistants in carrying out their responsibilities to ensure a consistent approach across the trust
5.7	Responsible for day to day transactions and reporting for the executive account

Finance Assistants

5.8	Ensuring that all income is accurately accounted for and is promptly collected and banked intact
5.9	Ensuring that all expenditure is accurately accounted for and invoices are correctly authorised for payment
5.10	Placing orders
5.11	Keeping all relevant audit paperwork associated with income, expenditure, petty cash, purchase orders, contracts
5.12	Produce at least termly statements of income and expenditure to budget holders
5.13	Produce monthly management accounts
5.14	Checking monthly payroll payments and reporting any errors to the payroll provider. Checking data held by payroll provider matches the academies local accounting system on an annual basis
5.15	Assisting in setting the annual budget.

Security of Assets

The Finance Teams are responsible for:

5.16	Maintaining a permanent and continuous register of all items of furniture, equipment, vehicles and plant. Items over £5 000 are capitalized and added to the Fixed Asset Register
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Information and Communication Systems

The COO is responsible for:

5.17	Maintaining the standards of control for such systems in operation within the Trust to include the use of properly licensed software, and for the security and privacy of data in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
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Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
Ordering Goods and Services	Up to £5 000	Budget Holder, Principal &/or Trust CFO	Selection from preferred supplier list unless agreed otherwise with CFO
	£5 001 to £25 000	Principal & Trust CFO	Minimum of 3 quotes
	£25 001 to £100 000	Trust CEO & CFO	Minimum of 3 quotes
	£101 000 to £250 000	Finance & Audit Committee	Formal tendering process, FTS where appropriate
	Over £250 000	Board of Trustees	Formal tendering process, FTS where appropriate
Contracts and Expenditure	Up to £25 000	Principals	
	Up to £100 000	CEO/CFO	
	£101 000 to £250 000	Finance & Audit Committee	
	>£250 000	Board of Trustees	
Expenditure from Reserves	Up to £10 000	Trust CFO	
	Over £10 000	Finance & Audit Committee	
Signatories for cheques, BACS payment authorisations and other bank transfers	Any	Two signatories from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trust CEO ○ Trust CFO ○ Trust COO ○ Principals ○ Vice Principals 	
Signatories for ESFA grant claims and ESFA returns	Any	Two signatories from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trust CEO ○ Trust CFO 	
Virement of budget provision between budget heads	Up to £25 000	Principals	
	£25 001 to £100 000	Trust CEO & CFO reporting to the Finance and Audit committee	
	£100 001 to £250 000	Finance & Audit Committee	
	Over £250 000	Board of Trustees	
Disposal of Assets	Up to £20 000	CFO	
	Over £20 000	CEO & Board of Trustees	
Write-off of bad debts	Up to £10 000	CEO	
	Over £10 000	Board of Trustees & EFSA approval	
Purchase of an asset through a finance lease		ESFA approval	
Purchase or sale of any freehold property		ESFA approval	
Granting or take up of any leasehold or tenancy agreement exceeding 3 years		ESFA approval	

APPENDIX 3: Schedule of BEST Meetings

Meeting Date	Time	Meeting	Location
2 October 2021	9:30am	BEST Annual Governor Conference	BEST House
7 December 2021	11:00am	AGM – Members & Trustees	BEST House
28 September 2021	10:00am	BEST Members’ Meeting	BEST House
21 September 2021	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
7 December 2021	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
25 January 2022	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
15 March 2022	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
10 May 2022	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
21 June 2022	10:00am	BEST Trustees’ Meeting	BEST House
16 November 2021	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee (Audit)	Virtual
1 March 2022	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee	Virtual
7 June 2022	10:00am	BEST Finance & Audit Committee (Budget)	Virtual
23 November 2021	9:00am	BEST Performance Committee (incl. Principals)	BEST House
1 March 2022	12:30pm	BEST Performance Committee	Virtual
7 June 2022	12:30pm	BEST Performance Committee	Virtual
7 September 2021	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
11 January 2022	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
26 April 2022	8:30am	BEST Subsidiaries Executive Committee	Virtual
7 September 2021	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
11 January 2022	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
26 April 2022	10:00am	BEST Capital & Estates Committee	Virtual
16 September 2021	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
14 October 2021	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
25 November 2021	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
13 January 2022	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
24 February 2022	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
24 March 2022	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
12 May 2022	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	BEST House
16 June 2022	8:00am	BEST Executive Team Meeting	Virtual
3 December 2021	10:00am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
4 March 2022	10:00am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
17 June 2022	10:00am	Chairs’ Forum Meeting	Virtual
28 September 2021	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
10 November 2021	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
20 January 2022	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
8 March 2022	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
4 May 2022	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual
23 June 2022	13:00pm	BEST SEND Meeting	Virtual

BEST Policies			
POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
ABSENCE (LEAVE)	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
ABSENCE (SICKNESS)	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
ANTI-BRIBERY	FINANCE	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
APPRAISAL PROCEDURE FOR SUPPORT STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
APPRAISAL PROCEDURE FOR TEACHING STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
CAPABILITY PROCEDURE FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
CHARGING AND REMISSION	FINANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
COMPLAINTS (TRUST LEVEL ONLY)	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
DISCIPLINARY	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
ECT POLICY ¹³	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
EQUALITY POLICY	COMPLIANCE		ANNUALLY (initially)
FAMILY RELATED LEAVE	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
FINANCIAL PROCEDURES	FINANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
FLEXIBLE WORKING	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
GDPR & PRIVACY NOTICES (INCL. BIOMETRICS)	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	2 YEARLY
GRIEVANCE POLICY	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
HARASSMENT AND BULLYING	HR	MANDATORY (incl. in Grievance Policy)	N/A
HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S)	H&S	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF IN SCHOOL	HR	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
PAY POLICY	HR	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	HR	MANDATORY	3 YEARLY
REDUNDANCY PROCEDURES	HR	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
RESERVES	FINANCE	RECOMMENDED	ANNUALLY
SAFEGUARDING POLICY (<i>TRUST TEMPLATE</i>)	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT	COMPLIANCE	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE	HR	RECOMMENDED	ANNUALLY
WHISTLEBLOWING	HR	RECOMMENDED	3 YEARLY
TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AGREEMENT (TURA)	COMPLIANCE	RECOMMENDED	ANNUALLY

¹³ Previously NQT policy – new guidance issued 2021

Academy Policies

POLICY TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	REVIEW PERIOD
ACCEPTABLE USE (OR E-SAFETY) POLICY – referenced in safeguarding policy	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	NOT STATED
ACCIDENT, INCIDENT AND NEAR MISS REPORTING PROCEDURE/POLICY	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED Under HSE guidance	NOT STATED
ANTI-BULLYING (can incl. in Behaviour Policy)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	NOT STATED
BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY Principal determined
CAREERS – PROVIDER ACCESS STATEMENT (YEAR 8 ONWARDS)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY
CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING (Adapted from the Trust template)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY
CURRICULUM HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES FOR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DT incl. food tech (localise and adopt model policy CLEAPPS L260) – <i>Middle and Upper only</i> Science (localise and adopt model policy CLEAPPS DL223) Art PE (this can be handbook rather than policy) 	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED Under Health & Safety at work ACT 1974; Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Industry Guidance	NOT STATED
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICIES	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	VARIES
EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT – TRUST PUBLISH POLICY	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Equality Information Must be updated and published at least every year Equality Objectives Must be updated and published at least every 4 years
FIRE POLICY/FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED Under Regulatory Reform (fire Safety) – Order 2005	NOT STATED
LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE/POLICY	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED	NOT STATED
LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY
SCHOOL EXCLUSION	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY
SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION	SCHOOL	RECOMMENDED (Not statutory for Academies)	Recommended ANNUALLY
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS Plus: SEND Information Report	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	ANNUALLY
SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS (Incl. first aid and children with health needs who cannot attend school)	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	Recommended ANNUALLY

Statutory Documents				
TITLE	OWNER	CATEGORY	Date	REVIEW PERIOD Stated by DfE (Sept 2019)
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN	SCHOOL	MANDATORY		3 YEARLY
CENTRAL RECORD OF RECRUITMENT AND VETTING CHECKS	SCHOOL/ TRUST	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Live Document
GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK/ SCHEME OF DELEGATION	TRUST		ANNUALLY Updated – Sept	NOT STATED (TRUSTEE/LGB Code of conduct recommended every 1-3 years)
KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION	SCHOOL	STATUTORY GUIDANCE DOCUMENT (guidance issued for September 2020)		
MINUTES OF, AND PAPERS CONSIDERED AT MEETINGS OF GOVERNING BODY AND ITS COMMITTEES	SCHOOL/ TRUST	MANDATORY		
PREMISES MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Recommended ANNUALLY (Varies depending on document)
REGISTER OF BUSINESS & PECUNIARY INTERESTS	SCHOOL/ TRUST	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Recommended ANNUALLY
REGISTER OF PUPILS ADMISSION TO SCHOOL	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Live Document
REGISTER OF PUPILS' ATTENDANCE	SCHOOL	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Live Document
SCHOOL INFORMATION PUBLISHED ON A WEBSITE	SCHOOL/ TRUST	MANDATORY	ONGOING (Live Document)	Live Document
WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN	SCHOOL	STATUTORY GUIDANCE DOCUMENT (Guidance issued July 2018)		

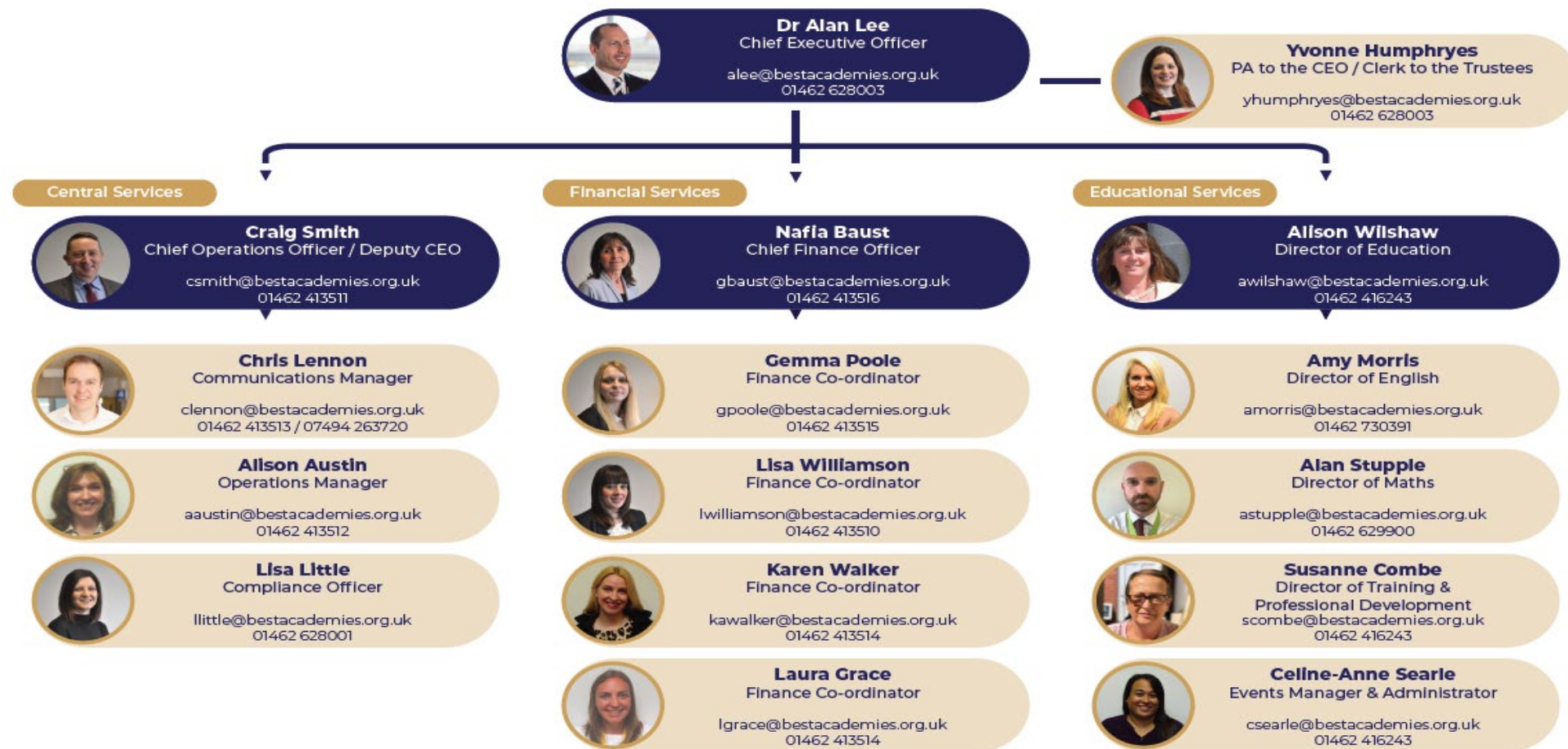
Appendix 5: BEST Quality Assurance Calendar

BEST Support				Timeline 2024/25											
Function	Lead	Detail	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	
Strategy	AL	Strategic Objectives and Plans	Implementation						Review		Trustees approve		Issue		
		Scheme of Delegation	Implementation						Review		Trustees approve		Issue		
		School Provision Maps	1st of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals			2nd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals		3rd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals				
		Principal meetings	Half termly meeting		Half termly meeting		Half termly meeting		Half termly meeting		Half termly meeting				
Governance	CS	Governance Audit (TBC)													
		Chairs Forum				Meeting			Meeting			Meeting			
		Governance Training	Training commences				Review					Audit			
Leadership Succession Planning	AL	Principal appointment, support, appraisal & CPD	Interviews CPD - Annual offer				Mid-year reviews								
	CS	LGB Chair Support, review and CPD		Governor Conference											
	AW	Leadership Qualifications: NPQML/ NPQSL/ NPQCH/ NPQEF 2	Annual Offer												
Compliance	CS/LL	Admissions	Trustees approve draft policy (Sept)		Policy Consultation (if required)		Trustees approve final policy	Submit policy to LA				Review Sept '24 policy			
		BEST Wide Policies (these policies may be reviewed in advance of these dates)	Safeguarding / TURA		Financial procedures / Reserves	Recruitment	Appraisal (teacher) / Allegations against staff / NGT /	Charging & remission	Disciplinary / Equality / H&S		Anti-bribery / FOI / GDPR	Complaints (Trust) / Pay / Staff CoC / Travel & sub			
		GDPR audits	DPL audit/ COO Interim report to	Principal Check			DPL audit / Trust audits	Principal check	COO report to Trustees		DPL audit	Principal check			
		GDPR link governor	Link governor visit				Link governor visit			Link governor visit					
		Equality & Diversity	Principal report to LGB & send copy to COO				COO report to Trustees								
		Equality & Diversity link governor	Link governor visit				Link governor visit			Link governor visit					
		Trust Website Audits	Website audit 1 of 2						Website audit 2 of 2						
		Important Policy Sheet (completed via SmartLog or Governor Hub)													
		Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests (completed via													
		Safeguarding	A/W/CS/LL	Staff Training											
Link gov visit (each term)	Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)				Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)			Link governor visit (include SCR compliance)							
School audits and action plans									Safeguarding audits			Report to Trustees			
Principal SCR check															
Health & Safety	CS / AA	Audits (Principals)	Consolidated report to Trustees		To LGBs on completion		Consolidated report to Trustees		To LGBs on completion		Consolidated report to Trustees	To LGBs on completion			
		PPM Compliance - via SmartLog	Annual Offer												
		Trust audit							Audit carried out by Cousins Safety and reports published for review						

Finance	NGB	BEST annual financial process	Year end procedures/preparation of final accounts			Final accounts approved by Trustees		Budget Building			Draft budgets finalised and consolidated	Consolidated budget to Trustees for approval		
		Consistant financial reporting (CFRs)	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees	Report to Trustees
		External audits	End of year audit							Internal Review	Teachers' Pension Audit		End of year Audit	
		Statutory returns - ESFA, HMRC, TP, Companies House	VAT return Q4 and payment Practices Report			Financial Statements to ESFA and VAT return Q1	Annual Accounts return to ESFA. Financial Statements to	Payment Practices Report	VAT Return Q2		Budget Forecast Return: Outturn to ESFA and End of Year	VAT Return Q3	Budget Forecast Return to ESFA	Corporation Tax Return
School Improvement / Standards	A/W	BEST target setting and monitoring	Post LGB and Appraisal					Data overview - pre Performance				Data overview - pre Performance		
		External reports	Chris Beeden annual outcomes Trust summary	External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee				External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee				External SIA Reports - pre-Performance Committee		
		School SEF	Completed by October Half-term					Updated by February Half-term					Review by End of June	
		School SIP	Completed by October Half-term					Updated by February Half-term					Review by End of June	
		Finance-led Curriculum Model												
		School Staffing Structure												
		School Improvement Provision Maps (see Strategy section)	1st of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals			2nd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals		3rd of 3 termly created	Sign off by Chairs & Principals			
		Stakeholder surveys	Settling in year groups					Wellbeing (by Feb Half-term)			T&L focus (by May Half-term)			
		BEST Teaching School CPD Offer	Annual Offer (reviewable on Academy needs)											
School Estates	CS/ AA		Review of Summer works					Prepare SCA/ Conditions Survey plans		Govt funding confirmed	Development of new plans and tendering	Report to Trustees	Summer Capital works	
HR	CS/ AA	Advice	Annual Offer											
		Case Study Work	Annual Offer											
Information Technology	CS		Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Performance monitoring meeting	Full ICT Board meeting	
Comms	CS/ AA	Ongoing support for schools						Training on website usage						
		Two tier newsletters					Newsletter			Newsletter				Newsletter

The Compliance calendar is available on Governor Hub.

CENTRAL TEAM STRUCTURE CHART



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM



Dr Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer

National Leader of
Education



Alison Willshaw
Director of Education

National Leader of
Education; Sub Regional
Lead of Teaching Schools



Craig Smith
Chief Operations Officer

National Leader of
Governance



Alan Stupple
Director of Maths



Susanne Combe
Director of Training &
Professional Development



Amy Morris
Director of English



Ian Evason
Principal,
Etonbury Academy

Local Leader of
Education

Lead Teachers



Lucy Blackford
EYFS



Natasha Cooper
PE &
Wellbeing



Michael Craddock
Attendance &
Behaviour



Milli Evanson
English &
Science



Rob Graves
Science



Jo Hammond
Art



Emily Hardy
ECF &
Music



Jimmy Hart
PE



Jason Hatchell
Geography



Julia Haynes
History



Prof Lee Hubbard
HPA



Lisa Oestreicher
MFL



Suze Prendergast
Geography
KS2



Damion Roberts
Primary
History



Tom Rowell
SEND



Allison Sugden
Wellbeing



Julie Undrell
Maths



Mike Ward
RE



Vishalle Yadav
Equality &
Diversity

SLEs

Aaron Beckett – Maths KS3/4/5
Joya Brachmachari-Limb – Performing Arts and T&L
Katie Bridge – Teaching & Learning
Katherine Brown – MFL
Flora Burt – Humanities & T&L
Becky Byrne – Behaviour SEN
Ashleigh Ferdinand – EYFS & Leadership
Sarah Horne – EYFS

Sarah Hughes – Maths KS1/2/3
Vicky Lake – Humanities
Christian Langley – Science KS2/3/4/5
Douglas Leonard – Maths
Lisa Lenk – EYFS
Alan Lovesey – Geography
Kate Mackenzie – Phonics/Maths KS1
Alex Mason – English KS3/4/5

Lynn Minshull – Maths KS1/2/3
Juliet Parker – Maths KS1/2/3
Hannah Potter – Geography and T&L
Sarah Robson – PE KS2/3
Richard Scoot – Behaviour & Attendance
Justin Togher – Maths KS3/4/5
Emily Wrigglesworth – English

Appendix 8: Cause for Concern

A BEST Cause for Concern notice may be issued by the CEO in any of the six circumstances below:

In which an academy:

- fail to faithfully uphold the vision, values and ethos of BEST
- possesses an Ofsted requires improvement grade or an EFSA financial requires improvement notice
- the BEST DofE or CFO identifies the academy as a high-risk academy
- pupil outcomes fall significantly below expectation, as determined by the BEST DofE
- fails to provide monitoring reports and/or fails to stay within agreed expenditure limits
- is not compliant with regard to its statutory obligations

In such a circumstance, delegated authority may be removed from either/both the Principal/LGB and corrective action will be taken, based on the identified concerns. This action may include consideration by the Board of either/both the Principal/LGB tenure.

Document / information for publication	Website	Comment
<u>Annual reports and accounts:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report Annual audited accounts for last 2 years (publish by 31st Jan) Memorandum of association Articles of association Names of charity trustees and members Funding agreement 	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
<u>Publication of executive pay</u> The trust must publish in a separate readily accessible form the number of employees whose benefits exceeded £100k, in £10k bandings, as an extract from the disclosure in its financial statements for the previous year ended 31 August (in the case of employees who are trustees, their salary and other benefits will also be disclosed in £5k bandings in the trust's financial statements).	Trust	Academies must have a link to the BEST website where this will be published.
The school's name, address and telephone number	Academy	
The name of the Principal	Academy	
The address and telephone number of the Multi-Academy Trust's registered office <i>Including trading disclosure: the registered name of the Academy Trusts; the part of the UK where it is registered (e.g. "England and Wales"); the registered address of the Academy Trust; the fact that it is a charitable limited company; and the registered company number.</i>	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website.
A statement of the school's values, ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims	Academy	
The name and address for correspondence for the Chair of Governors	Academy	
Relevant business and pecuniary interests of trustees, local governors and members	Trust & Academy	
Publish up to date details of governance arrangements in a readily accessible format (see full list of requirements in Academies Financial Handbook)	Trust & Academy	All academies must include a clear link to the Governance Handbook / Scheme of Delegation on the BEST website.
The names of the members of the Multi-Academy Trust	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
The names of the governors on the local governing body and their remit/committees (<i>can be published in a Governance Handbook – a clear link to document and what information can be found must be provided</i>)	Academy	
The structure and remit of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The members The board of trustees Committees LGBs Including full names of the chair of each	Trust	All academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where this information can be found.
Members of the Trust – for each member who has served at any point over the past 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name 	Trust	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of appointment • Who appointed them • Date he/she stepped down (if applicable) 		website where this information can be found.
<p>Trustees and LGBs – for each trustee and local governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name • Date of appointment • Who appointed them • Term of office • Date he/she stepped down (if applicable) 	Trust & Academy	Academies must have a clear link to the BEST website where the information re Trustees can be found.
<p><u>Attendance records (trustees and LGBs)</u></p> <p>For trustees – attendance records at board and committee meetings over the last academic year.</p> <p>For local governors – attendance records at local governing body meetings over the last academic year.</p>	Trust & Academy	
<p><u>Admissions Arrangements</u></p> <p>Academy trusts must publish the admissions arrangements for their schools on their website and keep them there for the whole of the offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).</p> <p>16 to 19 academies and colleges - <u>recommended</u> that details of admission arrangements are published.</p> <p>Information should be published a year before the beginning of the academic year to help parents and students make an informed choice, and it is recommended that the arrangements don't change during the year. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open days planned • the process for applying for a place • whether the academy gives priority to applications from pupils enrolled at particular schools 	Academy	Policy on BEST website – link to be provided on all academy websites.
<p><u>Admissions consultations</u> – during any consultation on changes to proposed admission arrangements, the following must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the full proposed admission arrangements including the proposed published admission number (PAN) • Details of the person to whom comments may be sent • The areas on which comments are not sought • Reference to the PAN being higher than in previous years (where applicable) 	Trust & Academy	
<p><u>Equality Information</u></p> <p>As public bodies, academies and further education institutions must comply with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish details of how the school complies with the public sector equality duty - updated every year • publish the school's equality objectives - updated at least once every 4 years <p>Include:</p>	Trust & Academy	Trust will produce a diversity and gender pay gap report, and publish this on the BEST website – all academies to provide a clear link to this information on their website.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eliminating discrimination (see the Equality Act 2010) advancing equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it consulting and involving those affected by inequality in the decisions the school takes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (affected people could include parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community) 		
Gender pay gap report	Trust	All academies to provide a clear link to the BEST website.
Name and contact details of SEND Co-ordinator (SENCO)	Academy	
Particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language	Academy	
<p><u>SEND information report</u></p> <p>Schools must publish an Information Report on their website about the implementation of the school’s policy for pupils with SEND and should update it annually.</p> <p>They should update any changes occurring during the year as soon as possible. The report must comply with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014, meaning that it must contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ‘SEND Information’ specified in Schedule 1 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. (Statutory guidance on this is contained in section 6.79 to 6.82 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years); information as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils the steps you have taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils the facilities you provide to help disabled pupils to access the school the plan prepared under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school’s curriculum improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled 	Academy	
<p><u>Pupil premium strategy</u></p> <p>Schools may wish to plan their pupil premium use over 3 years. They should aim to update the online strategy statement <u>by the end of the autumn term each year</u> to reflect their plans for the academic year after assessing the needs of the pupils, both new and existing.</p> <p>For the current academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school’s pupil premium grant allocation amount a summary of the main barriers to educational achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school 	Academy	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the school will spend the pupil premium to overcome those barriers and the reasons for that approach • how the school will measure the effect of the pupil premium • the date of the next review of the school's pupil premium strategy <p>For the previous academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the school spent the pupil premium funding • the effect of the expenditure on pupils <p>DfE templates available for use</p>		
<p><u>Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch up premium</u></p> <p>Schools must publish, for 2019/20 academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of how you spent your allocation for that year • how your use of that allocation made a difference to the attainment of the pupils who benefit from the funding <p>Final payments were made in relation to 2019 to 20 academic year, the 2020 to 21 academic year will be the last year on which schools must report how this funding was used.</p>	Academy	
<p><u>Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch up premium</u></p> <p>If schools receive the grant, they should publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how it is intended that the grant will be spent • how the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of those pupils at the school will be assessed 	Academy	
<p><u>PE and sport premium for primary schools</u></p> <p>Schools must publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount of premium received • a full breakdown of how it has been spent • the impact of the school has seen on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment • how the improvements will be sustainable in the future • the percentage of pupils within year 6 cohort that can do each of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25m ○ use a range of strokes effectively ○ perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations 	Academy	
<p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <p>Academies should publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the content of the curriculum the school follows in each academic year for every subject, including for mandatory subjects such as Religious Education even if it's taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else • the approach to the curriculum including how they are complying with their duties in the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Regulations 2014. • how parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum the school is following • how the school meet the 16 to 19 study programme requirements (if the school have a sixth form or offer education at 16 to 19) 	Academy	

<p>Depending on what phase of education the school offers, it is recommended that the school also publish any of the following that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the names of any phonics or reading schemes the school are using in key stage 1 a list of the courses available to pupils at key stage 4, including GCSEs the 16 to 19 qualifications the school offer <p>INCLUDE THE 3 I'S.</p>		
<p><u>Remote Education</u></p> <p>Publish information about your school's remote education provision on your website. An optional template is available to support schools with this requirement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of the remote curriculum Remote teaching and study time each day How to access remote education Engagement and feedback Additional support for pupils with particular needs Remote education for self-isolating pupils 	Academy	
<p>Ofsted reports – publish either a copy of the most recent Ofsted report or a link to the report on the Ofsted website.</p>	Academy	
<p>Information about where and how parents (including parents of prospective pupils) can access the Academy Performance Tables published by the Secretary of State.</p>	Academy	
<p><u>Key stage 2 (KS2)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress scores in reading, writing and maths Percentage of pupils who achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing and maths Percentage of pupils who achieved at a higher standard in reading, writing and maths Average scaled scores in reading and maths <p>Schools do not need to publish results for 2019/20¹⁴ but must publish previous data and mark clearly that these performance measures are not current.</p>	Academy	
<p><u>Key stage 4 (KS4)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress 8 score Percentage of pupils entering EBacc Pupil destinations – percentage of students staying in education or employment after KS4 Attainment in English and maths – percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in GCSE English and Maths Attainment 8 score <p>Schools do not need to publish results for 2019/20¹⁵ but must publish previous data and mark clearly that these performance measures are not current.</p>	Academy	

¹⁴ Guidance awaited re publication of results from 2020/21

¹⁵ Guidance awaited re publication of results from 2020/21

<p><u>Key stage 5 (KS5)</u></p> <p>Sixth forms should publish the following details from their 16-18 performance tables - schools most recent KS5 performance measures as published by the Secretary of State.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress • Attainment • English and mathematics progress • Retention • Destinations <p>Schools do not need to publish results for 2019/20 but must publish previous data and mark clearly that these performance measures are not current.</p>	Academy	
<p><u>Careers programme information</u></p> <p>From September 2018, academies, free schools and colleges should publish information about the school's careers programme. This information should relate to the delivery of careers guidance to year 8 to 13 pupils (12 to 18 year olds) and any requirement set out in the funding agreement to deliver careers guidance. For the current academic year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the name, email address and telephone number of the school's Careers Leader • a summary of the careers programme, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access information about the careers programme • how the school measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on pupils • the date of the school's next review of the information published 	Academy	
<p>Statutory policies for publication on website:</p> <p>Acceptable Use Policy (or e-safety policy – <i>referenced in safeguarding policy</i>)</p> <p>Accessibility plan</p> <p>Admissions policy including appeals timetable (BEST)</p> <p>Behaviour policy</p> <p>Behaviour Covid addendum</p> <p>Exclusion policy</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Charging & remission policy (BEST)</p> <p>Child protection/safeguarding (using BEST template)</p> <p>Child protection/safeguarding COVID addendum</p> <p>Complaints procedure</p> <p>Early years foundation stage policies (if applicable)</p> <p>Equality statement / objectives</p> <p>Freedom of information policy (BEST)</p> <p>GDPR & Privacy Notices (BEST)</p> <p>Health & Safety (BEST)</p> <p>Looked after & previously looked after children</p> <p>Sex & relationship education policy</p> <p>Special education needs policy</p> <p>Supporting pupils/students with medical needs (<i>including first aid and children who cannot attend school</i>)</p> <p>Whistleblowing (BEST)</p>	Academy (Trust for BEST policies)	All academies must provide a list of BEST published policies on their website together with a link to the BEST website policy page.

Publication scheme (a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000)	Trust	Academies must provide a link to the BEST website.
Cookie policy to provide internet users with clear and comprehensive information about the purposes for which the cookie is stored and accessed.	Trust & Academy	
Request for copies – state that paper copies of any information on the website can be provided if necessary.	Trust & Academy	
Name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public	Trust & Academy	
Parent View link	Academy	

NB. Websites must comply with data protection law if using photographs of individuals or data taken from members of the public. Websites must also observe intellectual property rights if publishing content produced by third parties.

Only statutory information required to be published on an academy website is checked in this audit, other areas of the website are not checked. The Trust will audit academy websites twice yearly. The academy is responsible for ensuring the compliance of the website between audits.

Please note that the contents of reports and policies are not checked during the website audits – just that the report/policy has been published and reviewed within the statutory time scales.

Appendix 10: BEST Governors' Code of Conduct

As individuals on the Governing Body for each academy we agree to the following and we/will:

- champion the vision, values and ethos of BEST
- adhere to the Seven Principles of Public, established by the Nolan Committee (see appendix 20)
- actively support and challenge the Principals¹⁶
- accept collective responsibility for all our decisions; observing complete confidentiality as appropriate
- have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer
- consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other academies, declaring any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise
- complete a Governor Self Audit form, attendance the BEST Governance Annual Conference and complete a minimum of one specific training course in line with the BEST Governance Skills audit
- attend at least (2/3) of meetings per year, or in the case of LGBs that meet more than 3 times, achieve at least 75% attendance. In the event an individual governor's attendance falls below this, their ability to effectively discharge their duties as a governor will be reviewed with them by the Chair of the Local Governing Body
- aim to remain current with the national agenda on education, including reading relevant update literature issued by BEST and/or DFE
- record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time
- act in the best interests of the academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body
- if we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate
- seek further support where necessary from the BEST's Governor Advice line accessed via the CEO, Dr Alan Lee, alee@bestacademies.org.uk or 07984 404578 (for Members and Trustees) or Craig Smith, csmith@bestacademies.org.uk or 07429 206091 (for LGB members).

¹⁶ Should the CEO decide that a cause for concern category is to be given to a particular academy, the LGB will work openly and positively with the school improvement/finance to secure rapid correction.

Appendix 11: BEST Chairs' Forum – Terms of Reference

Core Aim:

To ensure that the vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld, clearly communicated and revisited, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables all pupils and staff in our community to excel.

Overall Purpose and Responsibility:

- To provide the opportunity for LGB members from different academies and Board members to meet
- To facilitate good communications between LGBs and the Board of Trustees
- To offer a discussion forum for challenges to and management of LGBs.

Composition:

- The Board Chair will invite the Chairs – or their nominated representatives - of each LGB
- Board members have an open invitation to attend
- Members of the BEST Executive Team and external advisors will be invited by the Board Chair as deemed appropriate.

Proceedings:

- The forum will meet once a term, usually for 1 hour at a pre-determined school venue
- Agenda items/papers will be distributed 5 working days in advance of any meetings. One item will be a sharing of best practice by an LGB Chair
- The meeting will be minuted by the Clerk to the Board
- The CEO will report back to the Board on the meeting, attendance and general discussion themes/recommendations for action.

Appendix 12: BEST Local Governing Body Model

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context:

Local governing bodies (LGBs) are at the heart of BEST. Appointed by and reporting to the Board, they provide effective day-to-day oversight of BEST academies. LGBs are the face of BEST in the community and are responsible for championing BEST's mission, vision and values.

Core functions:

The core functions of the LGB are:

- Ensuring the mission, vision and values of BEST are faithfully upheld and clearly communicated, delivering an ethos and culture of ambition that enables students and staff to excel
- Holding the Principal to account and ensuring that the BEST approach to delivering progress and attainment, in which the minimum expectation for all students of being in the top 50% nationally, with an aspiration to be in the top 20% is strictly followed
- Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value.

Key responsibilities:

Vision, ethos and strategic direction (community engagement focus):

(Executive Support – Chief Operations Officer, Craig Smith)

- Champion BEST's mission, vision and values throughout the academy and wider community, nurturing a culture of consistent high expectations from all
- Support, monitor and challenge the Principal against targets set by BEST for the academy. Chair to support with the appointment/appraisal of the academy Principal
- Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.

Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the academy and its students:

(Executive Support – Director of Education, Alison Wilshaw)

- Involvement in the construction/approval of both the Academy Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation documents
- Ensuring that curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the academy, facilitated by an appropriate staff CPD programme
- Monitoring the performance of the academy with particular respect to the progress and attainment of individuals and groups (including the most disadvantaged and SEND), pupil well-being and staff appraisal
- Ensuring compliance with BEST Safeguarding and HR policies, promoting well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and students
- Monitoring all external reports, ensuring impactful Academy Action Plans are in place

Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent:

(Executive Support – Chief Finance Officer, Nafia Baust)

- Monitoring the use of resources to ensure best value, ensuring:
 - robust curriculum-led financial planning
 - effective costed staffing
 - adequate contingency and reserves – a minimum of 5% GAG funding - are available for capital expenditure and strategic planning
 - communication to Board of Trustees when there are concerns relating to the academy's financial position
- Ensuring appropriate use and probity of targeted funding, such as pupil premium and sports funding
- Maintaining a register of business and personal interests.

Composition and nomination of the Chair

BEST wishes the LGB to usually contain a maximum of 8 members:

- Two Parent LGB members
- The Principal
- One staff LGB member
- A minimum of one and up to four LGB members with a particular expertise, as identified the BEST Skills Audit.¹⁷

Appointments

The appointment of LGB members will be overseen by the COO and will require the approval of the Board.

Staff and parent members – nominations will be sought from staff and parents for those willing to serve as a member of the LGB. Elections will be held if more nominations are received than the number of vacancies.

LGB members will nominate and select their Chair for each academic year, from 1 September to 31 August for approval by the Board. The selection should take place at the last meeting of the Summer term in the preceding year or at the first meeting of the Autumn term for the current year. The Board Chair and BEST Clerk are to be notified within seven days of selection. Where there is more than one nomination for the role of Chair a secret ballot will be arranged by the minute taker, with guidance from the COO where required. The Chair should not be a staff member of the academy.

All LGB members are expected to visit the academy at pre-arranged times to take part in an agreed programme of monitoring activities and support with various academy events. Members will also be required to complete the annual skills audit and attend the Annual Governance Conference and identified Governance training opportunities.

The BEST Clerk will maintain a list of all Chairs, LGB members and their terms of office. The LGB Clerk is responsible for providing the BEST Clerk with termly updates.

Proceedings

(Executive Support, BEST Clerk -Yvonne Humphryes)

- The LGB shall meet at least six times a year.
Dates – including times and venues - for meetings will be published at the start of each year
- 51% of the membership – to include a minimum of one who is not a parent or staff member – is required for a meeting to be quorate
- Agendas will be agreed between the Chair and the Principal and will be published at least a week in advance of each meeting. Standing items shall include:
 - apologies for absence
 - declarations of interest
 - matters arising: safeguarding and GDPR updates
 - community engagement
 - educational performance
 - financial performance
- Minutes will be taken to record the proceedings and decisions of all meetings of the Committee, including recording names of those present and in attendance and, apologies and explanation for those not able to attend. Minutes will be stored on GovHub and be monitored by the COO/DE
- LGB Chairs will provide reports and updates to the Board as required, but with a minimum annual report.

¹⁷ This maximum number may be flexed, through consultation with the COO to ensure the LGB possesses all the prerequisite skills.

Terms of Office

- Staff members will be appointed for a three year period
- Parent members will be appointed for a three year period
- Other members will be appointed for a three year period, subject to evaluation by the LGB and Board
- No member shall serve for longer than nine years unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Evidence sources

BEST Governance Handbook
Performance Committee Reports
SIP and SEF documents
Finance and Audit Reports
Principal Academy Reports
Policies

Appendix 13: Local Governing Bodies: Community Engagement

Local Governing Bodies should ensure effective engagement with stakeholders, as understanding the views and experiences of stakeholders is a crucial part of the governance role, rather than just relying on the reports of the Senior Leaders within the school. If governors really want to get to know their schools, it is vital that they listen to a range of voices. The governors, working with the principal, must decide which key indicators they wish to monitor and plan for the process to take place.

The principal and the staff should have trust and confidence in the governors' integrity to act in the best interests of the whole school with the pupils at its heart. Trust and confidence are developed when the governors share responsibility for the work of the school, both good and bad, and take decisions that will lead to improvement in the quality of the school's education provision and pupil performance.

The Governors might join in a subject or curriculum review where they listen to the voice of pupils. They might attend a Parents' Evening and speak with parents. However, the most frequently used method of stakeholder engagement is by conducting a survey, which is both quick and meaningful to what you are trying to find out. Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) require that all Local Governing Bodies complete stakeholder surveys throughout each academic year, as stated in the Terms of Reference (Appendix 12), under Key responsibilities - Vision, ethos and strategic direction (community engagement focus). Bullet 3 states: **Regular community engagement, ensuring that systematic arrangements are in place to hear and respond to the voices of all stakeholders.**

The stakeholders (parents, pupils and staff), should each, individually, be surveyed at least once, annually. Therefore, the minimum of three surveys in total would be carried out. The suggestion would be therefore that one a term fits this structure quite naturally.

A quick consideration guide is shown below:

- What area will we examine?
- Which stakeholder are we targeting?
- Who will collect the evidence?
- How and when will it be collected?
- How and when will it be presented to all governors?
- What evidence will demonstrate success?
- How will actions be planned, should there need to be any, after the survey?

There are many templates of questions available across the Trust and beyond to help you to carry out these surveys. Please do ask either your Principal or the Director of Education should you need a sample to guide you.

Appendix 14: Local Governing Bodies: Safeguarding Link Governor Role

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that the school is implementing the following BEST policies:
 - Child protection/safeguarding including Covid-19 addendum
 - Staff code of conduct
 - Allegations of abuse against staff
 - Safeguarding Policy – Trust Template
- Monitor the school's safeguarding systems and procedures
- Ensure the school has appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education
- Ensure the school has appropriate online filters and monitoring systems in place
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Make sure the DSL has sufficient time, resources and training to carry out their role effectively
- Make sure the DSL is receiving adequate support in terms of their wellbeing
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated (named) teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, and that this person has appropriate training
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated (named) teacher to promote the mental health and wellbeing of the children
- Ensure the curriculum covers safeguarding, including online safety
- Keep up to date with statutory guidance relating to safeguarding and child protection and any advice issued by the relevant safeguarding partners
- Update the governing board on how the monitoring is going
- Make sure that checks to the single central record (SCR) are happening – to be carried out once per term as per the quality assurance calendar
- Meet regularly with the DSL to monitor that the school's policy and procedures are effective and all staff and governors have had the appropriate level of training (as applicable)
- Attend training for safeguarding link governors
- Encourage other members of the board/governing body to develop their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities
- Have an awareness of the LADO referrals (anonymised) and understand the process followed when concerns regarding staff are raised
- Participate in the annual safeguarding audit
- **Not** deal with specific safeguarding incidents, but will have an awareness of safeguarding incidents (anonymised)
- **Not** produce a safeguarding report to the board as this is done by the Principal or DSL

Safeguarding Link Governors must carry out a link governor visit each term as per the quality assurance calendar.

Appendix 15: BEST LGB Schedule of Reports

Timeline														
Function	Key Document	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	
Strategy	Scheme of Delegation							Receive draft for comment				Receive updated		
	Statement of Provision (provision maps)		CoG & Principal receive for sign off				CoG & Principal receive for sign off			CoG & Principal receive for sign off				
Compliance	GDPR Link gov visit	Link gov report				Link gov report			Link gov report					
	GDPR Trust Audit					DPL submits audit response to Trust								
	Equality Objectives	Review and publish progress against equality objectives annually, update objectives four yearly (and publish)												
	Equality & Diversity	Principal to report to LGB on progress & send copy to COO (COO will report to Trustees in January)												
	E&D link gov visit <i>(if appointed)</i>	Link gov report				Link gov report			Link gov report					
	Trust Website Audits	Receive report (audit 1 of 2)						Receive report (audit 2 of 2)						
	Renew declarations	To be completed on Governor Hub												
Safeguarding	Link gov report including SCR (visit min 3 times per year)	Receive report				Receive report				Receive report				
	School audits and action plans							By external consultant						
Health & Safety	Principal report (last LGB of each term)			Receive report				Receive report			Receive report			
	Trust audit							Audit carried out by Cousins Safety and reports published for review						
Finance	Previous year end outturn					Reserves position - provided when financial statements are finalised								
	Consistent financial reporting (CFRs)	Receive report at each meeting		Receive report at each meeting		Receive report at each meeting		Receive report at each meeting		Receive report at each meeting		Receive report at each meeting		
	Budget forecast - next year								Budget 3 year forecast					

Timeline													
Function	Key Document	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
School Improvement / Standards	SOAPs (school on a page)	Pre Trust Perf Comm				Pre Trust Perf Comm				Pre Trust Perf Comm			
	External SIA reports	Pre Trust Perf Comm				Pre Trust Perf Comm				Pre Trust Perf Comm			
	School SEF	Completed by October Half-term (pre Trust Perf Comm)				Completed by February Half-term (pre Trust Perf Comm)				Review pre Trust Perf Comm			
	School SIP	Completed by October Half-term (pre Trust Perf Comm)				Completed by February Half-term (pre Trust Perf Comm)				Review pre Trust Perf Comm			
	Pupil Premium Spending Review & Plan for Year	Review and update online statement (website) by <i>elo</i> Autumn Term (as per DfE guidance) - <i>aim to update online info for start of academic year</i>											
	PE & Sports Premium Review (primary schools)									Publish details of how you spend funding by <i>elo</i> summer term			
	Covid Catch Up	Updated reports to be published on websites (<i>await guidance on reporting dates</i>)											
	Covid Remote Learning Policy	Up to date policy/arrangements published on website											
	SEND Info Report	Annual review											

Equality & Diversity Charter

At Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the Trust feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.



BEST and its entities aim to meet its obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

LEADERSHIP	CULTURE	COMMUNICATION
<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate how well the setting is achieving the three aims of the general duty across all of the protected characteristics • Identify where there are gaps and prioritise these for action – identifying at least three measurable objectives to focus on over 4 years • Ensure the Equality Policy is implemented and monitored • Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development • Reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that exist • Ensure that equality is embedded within the curriculum 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See all learners as of equal value • Recognise and respect differences • Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belongings • Established Equality and Diversity working group • Mutual respect • Challenging incidents of prejudice including racism and homophobia 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult and involve the BEST community • Promote equality and diversity education amongst the BEST community • Ensure awareness of policies through robust communication processes

Appendix 17: BEST Wellbeing Charter

Care, Guidance and Wellbeing

Our core aims are to:

- Help staff maintain a healthy work/life balance and to feel happy and secure in the support that they receive from their own academy and BEST Trust as a whole
- Monitor work loads so that they are manageable, reviewing our calendar and practice often and so rationalising systems to become even more efficient and supportive



LEADERSHIP	CULTURE	COMMUNICATION
<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding health and wellbeing in to all aspects of the Trust • Funding Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)Trainers, and then in turn, MHFA Champions in each Academy • Updating 'Leading a Mentally Healthy school' training and rolling out to all Trust Leaders • Having a set of health, safety and wellbeing documents that provide employees with the tools to help themselves to improve their health and wellbeing • Running relevant policies by Unions • Supporting staff through periods of illness • Actively encouraging employees to make positive lifestyle choices and signposting a range of interventions and support mechanisms to help prevent ill-health, stay in work or return to work as soon as possible • Robust Safeguarding. We have an array of middle and senior leaders trained as DSLs to respond to the contextual issues that any Academy might face. This group will meet regularly to act a support mechanism to each other • Offering a 'Cultivating Leadership' Programme to the Executive team and beyond • Offering an Employee Assistance Programme to all staff 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an open and transparent environment that will not tolerate bullying, racism or inequality • Recruiting leaders and Trustees who understand that teachers and support staff are our most valuable resource and who support and challenge positively • Staff feeling valued and included, by creating an effective and meaningful CPD offer • Growing our own talent through our Leadership Ladder • Checking that funds are spent appropriately and add full, positive impact • Promoting Charity and Community involvement and encouraging care beyond our own family of Academies • Employing a Compliance Officer to ensure that the Trust follows correct procedures • Update Safer Recruitment training regularly • Checking that GDPR measures are in place and fit for purpose • Being mindful of pressures external to school that cause anxiety/stress in staff (eg Ofsted) 	<p>The Trust has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the means of communication meets the needs of all Trust stakeholders • Employing a Communications Officer • All stakeholders' voices are actively sought when appropriate to do so, so that all feel included and involved • Holding regular, meaningful meetings with Executive Team and Trustees, that are well organised and documented correctly • Producing high quality termly newsletters to circulate across appropriate stakeholders • Ensuring statutory policies are available via the Trust and Academy websites • Having wellbeing as a set item on LGB/ Academy agendas

Appendix 18: BEST SEND Guidance

We, at Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST), recognise that all staff and governors are responsible for the special educational needs and disabilities provision for all pupils/students in our care. The SEND Code of Practice does not specifically state what governors should be told about SEND, or stipulate any particular forms of reporting to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). However, the DfE Governance Handbook (October 2020) pinpoints aspects of practices that would raise standards and manage accountabilities well.

DfE Governance Handbook (SEND references)

- Paragraph 3.3 - outlines the role of Accountability for Educational Performance
- Paragraph 16 - draws attention to LGBs asking the right questions in order to improve pupil and staff performance with SEND pupils, and the importance of accessing robust and meaningful data
- Heading 6 (Compliance) – addresses SEND and Equality of opportunity
- 6.5.11/12 paragraphs 67-76 - covers children with special educational needs and disabilities, and the legal duties of the Academy and its Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

(Please refer to the Scheme of Delegation that outlines the accountability level for roles)

Trust

- Director of Education to provide strategic leadership for educational performance, standards and effectiveness across all BEST settings
- Director of Education to develop BEST-wide strategies and procedures for improving outcomes for all pupils/students in all BEST settings
- Director of Education to regularly meet with Principals to monitor actions/performance.

Local Governing Body

- Appoint a SEND link governor
- Review and interrogate the progress made against the last Key Stage data
- Support and challenge senior leaders to verify that pupil/student needs are met effectively
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and money spent
- Check that the key responsibilities of the SENCo are comprehensively drawn up
- Be assured that the SENCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out their role successfully
- Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and pupils/students
- Discharge duties in respect of pupils/students with SEND.

Principal

- Present SEND report to LGB – including sufficient information to allow the LGB to understand fully the pupil performance against National data and the pupil's own potential
- Ensure a whole-school SEND strategy is in place
- Ensure that the SENCo has received adequate training, and has sufficient time and resources to carry out their role
- Promote well-being, equality, diversity and tolerance amongst staff and pupils/students
- Discharge duties in respect of pupils/students with SEND.

SENCo

- Ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils/students
- Ensure that a SEND policy is in place, complies with current legislation and is updated on an annual basis
- Ensure that the SEND policy is implemented and embedded within the setting
- Ensure that the SEND information report is updated annually and published on the website
- Ensure that an accessibility plan is in place and reviewed three yearly
- Support the identification of pupils/students with SEND
- Co-ordinate provision for pupils/students with SEND
- Liaise with parents/carers of pupils/students with SEND
- Liaise with other providers, outside agencies, educational psychologists and external agencies
- Ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils/students with SEND up to date
- Work with the Principal to develop a whole-school SEND strategy
- Co-ordinate staff training as appropriate.

Whilst there is no stipulated format (or frequency of times), to follow where reports to Governors are concerned, a recommended template to report to governors on SEND pupils/students is available on Governor Hub on the resources page. This template may be adapted to suit the individual needs of each setting. This template may also be used as part of the SEND link governor visit

Appendix 19: Governance and Ofsted

School Inspection Handbook

Section 5 (April 20)

Governance Extracts

Paragraph	Commentary
	Part 1. How Schools will be inspected - Before the Inspection
	Notification and Introduction
53.	<p>As is the case for all schools, a good or outstanding school may still receive a 'no formal designation' inspection carried out under section 8 at any time in certain circumstances. For example, we may decide that we should inspect a school earlier than its next scheduled inspection if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are potential safeguarding issues, including a decline in the standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline, and/or welfare concerns • a subject or thematic survey inspection raises general concerns • we have received a qualifying complaint about the school that, taken alongside other available evidence, suggests that it would be appropriate to do so • concerns are raised about standards of leadership or governance¹⁸ • concerns are identified about the breadth and balance of the curriculum (including if the statutory requirement to publish information to parents is not met) • HMCI or the Secretary of State have concerns about the school's performance
70.	<p>Ofsted will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when making judgements, take a range of evidence into account, including official national data; discussions with leaders, staff and pupils; questionnaire responses; and work in pupils' books/folders/sketchbooks and so on • judge fairly schools that take radically different approaches to the curriculum; inspectors will assess any school's curriculum favourably when leaders have built or adopted a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing and implemented it effectively • report on any failure to comply with statutory arrangements when they form part of the inspection framework and evaluation schedule, including those relating to the workforce (see part 2 of this handbook) • allow the school to invite as many governors or trustees as possible to meet inspectors during an inspection, as restrictions allow. These meetings may include a virtual option using video/telephone calls if necessary • in academies, meet those directly responsible for management and governance, including the chief executive officer (CEO) or their delegate (or equivalent), the chair of the board of trustees and other trustees • talk to the chair of governors/board of trustees by telephone if they are unable to attend a face-to-face meeting with the inspector in the school • invite the headteacher (or equivalent) and, in academies, the CEO or their delegate, to observe the inspectors' final team meeting (as restrictions allow) • expect schools to maintain, as they are required to, the single central record detailing checks carried out; we expect multi-academy trusts (MATs) to maintain this in each of their academies and to ensure that the information is recorded in a way that allows for details of each individual academy to be provided separately and without delay
77.	During the initial notification phone call, the inspection support administrator will check the number of pupils on roll at the school, the governance arrangements for the school and whether the school has any SEND, nursery provision for 2- and 3-year-olds or additional resource provision.
79.	<i>The inspection support administrator will request...</i>

¹⁸ Governance embolden for emphasis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> documented evidence of the work of those responsible for governance and their priorities, including any written scheme of delegation for an academy in a MAT
	Part 1. How Schools will be inspected - During the Inspection
	Meeting those responsible for Governance
88.	It is important that inspectors speak to those responsible for leadership and governance during inspection. Since schools, and especially MATs, operate a wide variety of leadership and governance models, it is essential that inspectors establish who is responsible for leadership and governance .
89.	<p><i>The Lead Inspector will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish what the governance structure of the school or academy is, with reference to the range of functions delegated to local governing bodies or other committees confirm arrangements for meetings with the school and, if appropriate, MAT executive leaders, as well as representatives of those responsible for the governance of the school and anyone else they think relevant. The lead inspector should be guided by the school here as to who they need to meet in the structure of a MAT
134.	Inspectors will always seek to meet those responsible for governance during the inspection.
136.	In a school that is part of a MAT, the board of trustees is the governance body. Often, local governing bodies can appear responsible for governance , when in reality it is trustees who are accountable for the academy trust. Local governing bodies are committees to which trustees have often chosen to delegate some specific responsibilities, but in some cases they may act purely as advisory bodies and engage with the community. Their responsibilities will normally be set out in the trust's scheme of delegation. Sometimes, their powers are delegated from the managers of the MAT; in this case, they are part of the school's management, not its governance . Inspectors will therefore need to be careful to establish who has overall responsibility for governance . Inspectors will also ensure that meetings are with those who are directly responsible for exercising governance of the school and for overseeing its performance.
137.	The role that governors and trustees play in the school's performance is evaluated as part of the judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management, and each report will contain a separate paragraph that addresses the governance of the school.
138.	As with the meetings between inspectors and pupils, parents and staff, meetings or telephone discussions with those responsible for governance should take place without the headteacher or other senior staff being present.
145.	Due to the diverse nature of school governance , in some schools a single individual may have more than one of the above roles.
145/146.	<p><i>The onsite inspection ends with a final feedback meeting with the school.</i></p> <p>During this meeting, the lead inspector will ensure that the headteacher, those responsible for governance and all attendees are clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> about the provisional grades awarded for each key judgement. about the key findings from the inspection, as summarised in the final summary evaluation. The lead inspector must give sufficient detail to enable all attendees to understand how judgements have been reached and for those responsible for the governance of the school to play a part in beginning to plan how to tackle any areas for improvement that the grades are provisional and so may be subject to change as a result of quality assurance procedures or moderation and must, therefore, be treated as restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school). They may be shared with all those responsible for the governance of the school, irrespective of whether they attended the meeting, so long as they are clearly marked as provisional, confidential and subject to quality assurance. Information about the inspection outcomes should be shared more widely only when the school receives a copy of the final inspection report
	Providing feedback
172.	Inspection reports will be quality assured before we send a draft to the school. In most circumstances, the school will receive the draft report within 18 working days after the end of the inspection. The draft report is restricted and confidential to the relevant personnel (as determined by the school), including those responsible for governance , and should not be shared more widely or published. We may also

	send the draft report to the DfE and other bodies as necessary. This will only take place following moderation or quality assurance.
	Part 1. How Schools will be inspected - After the Inspection
	Arrangements for publishing the report
239.	<p><i>Evidence gathering activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gathering the views of parents, staff, those with responsibility for governance and other stakeholders

	Part 2. The evaluation schedule – how we will judge schools
	Grade descriptors for personal development
258. Inadequate (4)	<p>Personal development is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant minority of pupils do not receive a wide, rich set of experiences. Leaders and those responsible for governance, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity in the school. Leaders and those responsible for governance are not protecting pupils from radicalisation and extremist views. Policy and practice are poor, which means that pupils are at risk. Leaders and those responsible for governance are actively undermining fundamental British values and are not protecting pupils from radicalisation and extremist views.
	Leadership and Management
259.	<p>The leadership and management judgement is about how leaders, managers and those responsible for governance ensure that the education that the school provides has a positive impact on all its pupils. It focuses on the areas where inspection and research indicate that leaders and managers can have the strongest effect on the quality of the education provided by the school. Important factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaders' high expectations of all pupils in the school, and the extent to which these are embodied in leaders' and staff's day-to-day interactions with pupils the extent to which leaders focus their attention on the education provided by the school. There are many demands on leaders, but a greater focus on this area is associated with better outcomes for pupils whether continuing professional development for teachers and staff is aligned with the curriculum, and the extent to which this develops teachers' content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time, so that they are able to deliver better teaching for pupils the extent to which leaders create coherence and consistency across the school so that pupils benefit from effective teaching and consistent expectations, wherever they are in the school whether leaders seek to engage parents and their community thoughtfully and positively in a way that supports pupils' education. Also, whether leaders are thoughtful in drawing boundaries and resisting inappropriate attempts to influence what is taught and the day-to-day life of the school the extent to which leaders take into account the workload and well-being of their staff, while also developing and strengthening the quality of the workforce the extent to which leaders' and managers' high ambitions are for all pupils, including those who are harder to reach. This includes ensuring that practices such as 'off-rolling' do not take place and that the way the school uses the pupil premium is founded on good evidence whether leaders and those responsible for governance all understand their respective roles and perform these in a way that enhances the effectiveness of the school
	Governance
266.	Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance .
267.	In a maintained school, those responsible for governance are the school governors. In a stand-alone academy, it is the trustees.
268.	In a MAT, the trustees are responsible for governance . Inspectors will ask to speak to one or more of the trustees. It may be that, on occasion, the trustees have chosen to delegate their powers to the members of the 'academy committee' or 'local governing board' at school level. If inspectors are informed that a local governing board has delegated responsibilities, they should establish clearly which powers are with the trustees, which are with leaders of the MAT and which are with the local

	governing board. They should then ensure that both their inspection activities and the inspection report reflect this.
269.	Inspectors will need to bear in mind, when inspecting academies that are part of a MAT, that governance functions can be quite different from those in a maintained school. Some functions that a governing body in a maintained school would carry out may be done by management or executive staff in a trust. If this is the case, it will still be important for inspectors to ascertain the trust board's role in the process and how it ensures that these functions are carried out properly.
270.	The governance handbook sets out the purpose of governance , which is to provide confident, strategic leadership, and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.
271.	<p>The governance handbook also sets out the statutory functions of all boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern.</p> <p>There are three core functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction o holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff o overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money well spent, including the pupil premium.
272.	Inspectors will explore how governors carry out each of these functions. For example, the clarity of the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction will have a significant impact on the decisions that leaders make about curriculum. Inspectors will consider whether the work of governors in this respect is supporting the school to provide a high-quality education for its pupils.
273.	In addition, those with governance /oversight are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010 and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.
	Sources of evidence specific to leadership and management
312.	<p>Evidence used to evaluate the impact of leaders' work, both currently and over time, includes, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o meetings with leaders, including MAT senior staff if appropriate, to discuss how well they know the school and the quality of education that it provides for pupils o meetings with those responsible for governance, as appropriate, to evaluate how well they fulfil their statutory duties, including their duties under the Equality Act and in relation to safeguarding.
	Grade descriptors for leadership and management
314.	<p>Outstanding (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school meets all the criteria for good in leadership and management securely and consistently. • Leadership and management are exceptional. <p>In addition, the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders ensure that teachers receive focused and highly effective professional development. Teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge consistently build and develop over time. This consistently translates into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum. • Leaders ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels and that issues are identified. When issues are identified, in particular about workload, they are consistently dealt with appropriately and quickly. • Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues.
315.	<p>Good (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice. This vision has been maintained throughout the pandemic. • Leaders focus on improving teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge in order to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment. The practice and subject knowledge of staff, including newly qualified teachers, build and improve over time. This includes building teachers' expertise in remote education.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders aim to ensure that all pupils successfully complete their programmes of study. They provide the support for staff to make this possible. They create an inclusive culture and do not allow gaming or off-rolling. • Leaders engage effectively with pupils and others in their community, including, when relevant, parents, employers and local services. Engagement opportunities are focused and have purpose. • Leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff, including their workload. This includes managing staff workloads proactively in response to COVID-19. • Leaders protect staff from bullying and harassment. • Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. Governors/trustees ensure that the school has a clear vision and strategy, that resources are managed well and that leaders are held to account for the quality of education. • Those with responsibility for governance ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding. • The school has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to: identify pupils who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help pupils reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring them in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; and manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to pupils.
315	<p>Inadequate (4)</p> <p>Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's capacity to improve the quality of education, pupils' personal development or pupils' behaviour and attitudes is poor, or leaders are overly dependent on external support (MAT support within a trust is not considered external support). • Leaders are not doing enough to tackle weaknesses in the school. • The improvements that leaders and those responsible for governance have made are unsustainable or have been implemented too slowly. • The school is systematically gaming its results, entering pupils for courses that are not in their educational best interest. • There is evidence that pupils have been removed from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by the school encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, and leaders have taken insufficient action to address this. • Leaders are not aware of, or are not taking effective action to stem, the decline in the attainment or progress of disadvantaged pupils. • There is a clear breach of one or more of the legal responsibilities of those responsible for governance, and that breach is serious because of the extent of its actual or potential negative impact on pupils. The proprietor/governing body either is unaware of the breach, or has taken insufficient action to correct it and/or to remedy the negative or potential negative impact on pupils and/or to ensure that a suitable system is in place to prevent a similar breach in the future. • Safeguarding is ineffective. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements, or they give serious cause for concern, or the school has taken insufficient action to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident.
	Notes to the EIF:
29. (Section at the end of handbook)	This must be checked with the headteacher as part of the call. If MATs have delegated responsibility to local governing bodies, this should be set out in a scheme of delegation. Academies should also set out their governance structure in their annual financial statements, which can generally be found through the DfE performance tables site. Inspectors should clarify where responsibility lies and who they should talk to during the inspection, especially where a school is part of a MAT.
36. (Section at the end of handbook)	We will consider inspection without notice when there are serious concerns about one or more of the following: the breadth and balance of the curriculum; rapidly declining standards; safeguarding; a decline in standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline; and standards of leadership or governance .

Appendix 20: The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of the Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

All members of the LGB should sign the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' declaration. A copy of this should be stored on GovHub.

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

I have received a copy of BEST's Governance, Scheme of Delegation and Operational Structure'. I accept the conditions of being a Governor therein described and will do my very best to promote BEST and its academies at all times.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

1. Introduction

Governance is a demanding and ever more complex activity – recruiting, developing and retaining the right people to be governors is essential if we want governance to be effective.

The development of high quality governance across BEST (Bedfordshire Schools Trust) was recognised with the award of the nationally renowned Governor Mark Award in 2019 – and we are incredibly proud that BEST are the first MAT to have achieved this award. Whilst this demonstrates that there is strong and effective governance in place within BEST it is critical to ensure this is maintained and developed – central to this is ensuring high quality support is available to all those who undertake governance roles within BEST.

In this document we are pleased to be able to set out the BEST Core Offer of support available to all those in a governance role within BEST. This extends to Local Governing Board (LGB) governors, BEST Trustees (sometimes called Directors) and BEST Members. For further information and an in-depth overview of how governance works within BEST please refer to the annually updated BEST Governance Handbook: (Insert hyperlink)

<https://www.bestacademies.org.uk/site/data/files/governance/legal/55AF0CC023E073949FC07DC7CD8FE367.pdf>

It should also be recognised that BEST, with 10 schools and approximately 65-70 governors, has to ensure that the support offered is appropriate to enable governors to function effectively but it is also proportionate in terms of resource devoted to that support. All support must ensure best value and comparable to the levels of support invested in staff members.

The key driver for governance support is to enable governors to fulfil the three core functions of governance (as defined in the DfE Governance Handbook, Ofsted Framework and Academies Financial Handbook) namely:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

2. BEST Core Offer

The BEST Support Services team provides the following support to all governors, free at point of delivery, throughout the year and upon request. The support will be responsive and community led and as such may vary from year to year - dependent on the existing skill set of governors and emerging demands from within and beyond the Trust.

Governance Handbook – the Handbook is a key resource to provide support including model terms of reference, clarification of roles and responsibilities, a clear Scheme of Delegation, policy schedule, model terms of reference, a Quality Assurance Calendar, a Code of Conduct and Website Compliance checklist

Governor Advice Line (p44 of Handbook) – access to ongoing support from Dr Alan Lee, CEO and National Leader of Education (NLE) for Members and Trustees or Craig Smith, COO and National Leader of Governance (NLG) for LGB members

- Contact details: seek further support where necessary from the BEST's Governor Advice line accessed via:
CEO, Dr Alan Lee, alee@bestacademies.org.uk or 07984 404578 (for Members and Trustees) or
COO, Craig Smith, csmith@bestacademies.org.uk or 07429 206091 (for LGB members).

Termly Governor Newsletter – a termly newsletter to provide updates on all governance activity, aimed at ensuring all governors can see wider governance practice across the LGBs and at Trust Board/Member level

Support for Chairs – bespoke tailored support for all Chairs within BEST, be that a new first time Chair or experienced Chairs managing specific issues.

Annual Governor Conference – a key, high profile event to share importance governance issues, celebrate successes and listen to governors. Now established in the annual cycle with high quality inputs and impressive attendance levels.

Annual Skills Audit – sharing of a Skills Audit to enable an annual audit of skills level and recognised need within each LGB or Trust Board. This supports reflective practice and an honest consideration of future support needs for the governing body group.

Governor Recruitment – any LGB seeking to recruit new members can request support; this support will be bespoke and may come in many forms such as advice, marketing materials, advocating on behalf of the LGB, help with shortlisting and interviewing etc.

Bespoke training – the Annual Skills Audit feeds into a bespoke programme of governor training – noticing the key issues emerging for the audits and relating them to the three core functions of governance. These courses will be provided by BEST, will be academy/BEST specific and tailored to meet the identified need in BEST. Appropriately, trained experts will deliver them.

Induction Programme – BEST offers a detailed 4-part Induction programme for new and existing governors. The programme is designed to support governors to find out more about BEST and how the collective functions of governance work together across the Trust. New LGB members also receive support and induction at LGB level (the support varies from LGB to LGB)

Support to address statutory duties – governors need awareness of statutory responsibilities such as Public Sector Equality Duty/Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety, GDPR, etc. Support is provided in a variety of ways including Central Services support and online packages

Chair of Governors Group – this new and emerging group has been established to support Chairs in their key role and share best practice across all aspects of governance within BEST. It is also anticipated that the group will support efficiency activity e.g. sharing key materials, supporting each other etc.

GovernorHub – online storage and communication portal to manage governor business and communications, used Trust wide for all governance activity

Clerk support – each LGB recruits its own Clerk but support is offered from BEST where appropriate and upon request

Ofsted inspection support – the approach to Ofsted Inspections is to ensure governance is considered in a Trust perspective i.e. how the LGB (as a sub group of the Trust Board) and Trust work together to ensure effective governance is in place. This includes COO/NLG attendance at the appropriate meeting during the inspection process

External Support – via professional contacts or membership, BEST has access to external advice and expertise such as Forum Strategy/Michael Pain, Confederation of Schools Trusts (CST)/Leora Cruddas, NGA/Emma Knights.

3. Additional Sources of Support

Whilst the BEST Core Offer should meet high-level need it may well be that additional support is identified and required at an individual board level (Members, Trust Board, individual academy LGB). Once identified the individual board should consider how best this need might be met – that could include a discussion with the BEST Central Services team (including the School Improvement and Teaching School elements) or could be from another governance board within BEST – increasingly LGB to LGB support is expected to become a preferred model of support given the developing expertise within BEST, perhaps facilitated and encouraged by the Chairs' Forum. However, there should also be a consideration of the additional support that governors can access from outside of BEST. Below is a list of the more prominent sources of support but is not an exhaustive list:

National Governance Association (NGA) <https://www.nga.org.uk/Home.aspx> – the national membership association for school governance. Much support (including a number of model documents, templates, policies) is available online and free to access but there are also membership options to consider

The Key for Governors <https://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/> – an off shoot for The Key for School Leaders, comprehensive website for support, again some free to access and membership options

Central Bedfordshire Council Governor Training Package

<https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/r4bm8sd28qpb7yftx1tcu7c8kgqidma2> – a comprehensive package of training, including induction training, open to all schools. As such, some courses will not be directly relevant to academies. Governors can sign up to individual courses or an unlimited use annual subscription.

Inspiring Governance <https://www.inspiringgovernance.org/> – DfE funded governor recruitment website and support organisation

Various Websites – to name a few

<https://www.moderngovernor.com> – interactive online e-learning modules, subscription based

<https://www.governorsforschools.org.uk> – recruiting governors

<https://www.theschoolbus.net/home> – subscription based advice and guidance service for schools

<https://www.academyambassadors.org> – recruiting governors for academies

<http://www.thegovernor.org.uk> – free advice and support for governors

Appendix 22: BEST Strategic Plan – Overview - 2016 – 2023

Year	Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction	Holding executive leaders to account for educational performance	Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent
Phase One - Delivering Clarity (BEMAT to BEST: mission, vision, values and operating principles)			
2016-17	BEMAT becomes BEST. Etonbury Academy Phase 1 new build is completed.	2 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 school gained R/I inspection. 34 of 40 50 th percentile targets achieved	Support from reserves required, in response to significant funding cuts. Curriculum and staffing efficiencies. Curriculum reviews, financial planning metrics and benchmarking.
2017-18	ETA new build is completed Arlesey Nursery is opened. SCA joins BEST. Central Services Review, greater focus on SI.	3 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 RI inspection. 46 of 49 50 th percentile targets achieved. 2 successful Ofsted inspection.	Reserves used to support ETA staff expansion and first year of SCA deficit recovery plan. All schools ended the year with better balances than budgeted. Reserves increased slightly. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust/Nursery accounts brought up to the required standard. School Condition and Devolved Formula Capital allocations methodology implemented
2018-19	ETA becomes a fully extended-Secondary school. LA joins BEST. 45% of central funds allocated for school improvement. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust fully integrated into BEST. Embed Compliance activity/QA calendar. First Governor Conference and concept of 'governance roles' developed. Gain National Governance Mark. ICT contract renewal reduced cost to all schools. Other contracts and SLAs reviewed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools. Re-designation of BEST Teaching School. BEST TS gains Appropriate Body status.	Schools set balanced budgets except for SCA but their deficit recovery is underway. Central finance team covered for absent local finance staff. Finance function strengthened further by 4 new qualified/skilled finance assistants. Ongoing training for all finance staff in place. Further optimisation of systems and processes. Continue to build up reserves to improve resilience against further funding cuts.
2019-20	PBA opens. Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Financial modelling to establish level of risk and potential mitigation in plan for 2-tier move. SCA deficit recovery plan complete. Pix Brook financial planning for the DfE. Additional work from LVA absorbed at no extra cost by finance team. Nursery systems updated to accommodate growth, improve accuracy, reduce processing time and provide more professional interface with customers. Build reserves further.
Summary Achievements 2016-20	BEST comprises: 9 schools; 2 nurseries; 1 teaching school; 1 SCITT; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision.	All Ofsted inspections since joining BEST achieved a Good grade.	Financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year.
	All our schools remained open throughout the national COVID pandemic lockdown (Inc.: Bank Holidays) for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.		

Phase Two - Delivering connection
(Three to two tier: uniting BEST, defining culture and laying foundations)

2020-21	Preparing for and successfully opening all our schools to all our children, in the face of the national COVID pandemic.		
	Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move. Another school joins BEST. Final year of 3 year Capital and Estates SCA programme – new Conditions Surveys and review of onward priorities.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	All schools working toward contributing at least 5% of their GAG income to the pooled reserves. Review and benchmark auditor services. Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school to estimate the extent of the restructuring required. Set LVA 2021/22 budget for primary structure. Incorporate Campton Lower School and LVA nursery into trust systems and procedures.
2021-22	Intensify change to 2 tier preparations. Details to be confirmed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school fine-tuned to clarify restructuring plan. All schools continue to increase to 5% target. Review systems to ensure compatibility with the 2-tier structure. Create designated revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier.
2022-23	State of readiness for 2 tier change. Details to be confirmed. Another nursery opens.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Support the schools with financial planning and set budgets in the spring term that are in line with 2 tier transition to their new primary/secondary structure. Restructuring to be completed. Add further to designated 2 tier contingency funds. Continue strengthening viability of individual schools.
2023-24	Implementation of 2 tier structure begins.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Strategically employ contingency to ensure smooth, efficient transition to 2 tier. Continue to increase reserves to 5% target.
Summary Targets 2020-24	BEST comprises: 10 schools; 6 nurseries; 1 SCITT; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile.	Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.

Phase Three - Delivering excellence (Being the BEST: growth beyond Bedfordshire, Outstanding inspections and exceptional performance)			
2024-25			
2025-26			
2026-27			
2027-28			
Summary Targets 2024-28	BEST comprises: 12 schools; 8 nurseries; 1 SCITT; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile.	Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.

Appendix 23: Bedfordshire Schools Trust: Ofsted Inspections

Academy Name	Opening date as an academy	Date joined BEMAT/BEST	Date of Previous Inspection	Previous Inspection Judgement	Most Recent Inspection Date	Most Recent Inspection Grade	Next Inspection Due (approximate)
Campton Academy	1 st Nov 2020	1 st Nov 2020	31 st Oct 2006	Satisfactory	12 th Jan 2010	Outstanding	By Nov 2023 ¹⁹
Etonbury Academy	1 st Nov 2011	1 st Nov 2011	16 th Nov 2017	Requires Improvement	11-12 th Feb 2020	Good	Feb 2024
Gothic Mede Academy	1 st Nov 2013	1 st Nov 2013	16-17 th June 2011	Good	27-28 th June 2017	Good	June 2021*
Gravenhurst Academy	1 st Sept 2013	1 st Sept 2013	9 th Oct 2007	Good	7-8 th Mar 2011	Outstanding	Inspection due anytime*
Langford Village Academy	1 st June 2014	1 st June 2014	13-14 th Nov 2013 (Section 8 – 16/1/14)	Requires Improvement	3-4 th May 2017	Good	May 2021*
Lawnside Academy	1 st Jan 2019	1 st Jan 2019	-	-	Previous judgements now n/a as academy converter		By Jan 2022 ²⁰
Pix Brook Academy	1 st Sept 2019	1 st Sept 2019	New Free School	n/a	n/a	n/a	By Sept 2022 ²¹
Robert Bloomfield Academy	1 st May 2011	1 st May 2011	15 th May 2008	Outstanding	25-26 th June 2014	Outstanding	Inspection due anytime*
Samuel Whitbread Academy	1 st March 2012	1 st March 2012	15-16 th May 2014	Good	31 st Oct – 1 st Nov 2017	Good	Oct/Nov 2021
St Christophers Academy	1 st April 2012	1 st Sept 2017	9 th Feb 2016	Good	26-27 th Sept 2019	Good (Section 8 Inspection)	Potentially Sept 2021 ²²
BEST Nursery – Shefford	n/a	n/a	11 th April 2012	Outstanding	5 th May 2016	Outstanding	May 2020*
BEST Nursery – Arlesey	n/a	n/a	10 th Dec 2012	Good	27 th June 2018	Good	June 2022
BEST Nursery – Langford	n/a	n/a	Opened April 2021	n/a	n/a	n/a	October 2023 ²³

*Owing to the COVID Pandemic, some inspections have been, or may be delayed. See the latest version of the Schools Inspection Handbook for guidance regarding revised timeframes.

¹⁹ Ofsted Inspection within 3 years of becoming an academy

²⁰ Ofsted Inspection within 3 years of becoming an academy

²¹ Ofsted Inspection within first 3 years of opening

²² Section 8 undertaken, if evidence is obtained by Ofsted that school has improved or declined, a Section 5 can be carried out within 1-2 years of section 8

²³ Within 30 months of registration as per Early Years inspection handbook for Ofsted registered provision