



BRIGANTIA
LEARNING TRUST

Creating excellence together

**The Role &
Responsibilities
of the Academy
Advisory
Councils**

Autumn 2019

Creating Excellence Together

1. WELCOME

We are delighted that you have joined the Brigantia Learning Trust as an Academy Advisory Councillor. It is an exciting opportunity to be part of the life of your local Academy and all that it offers. This Brigantia Academy Advisory Council Handbook sets out the Brigantia Learning Trust vision, explaining why we exist and provides information for you about your role as an Academy Advisor and the way Academy Advisory Councils work.

What is Brigantia Learning Trust?

Brigantia Learning Trust is an academy based, cross phase Multi-Academy Trust that currently operates incorporates five academies on six sites. Our fundamental moral purpose as educators is to develop our young people to think for themselves, learn new skills and develop their knowledge preparing them for an ever-changing world.

Mission Statement

The mission statement of the Trust and its academies is to : “Improve life chances and secure social mobility and justice for children, young people and their families with the communities we serve.”

Brigantia Learning Trust Vision

To ‘Create Excellence Together in every phase of a learners’ journey from 2-19

Brigantia Learning Trust Values

As a mixed phase academy trust that serves children and young people from the age of 2-19, we are all united in our values of

‘ambition, care, confidence, creativity, integrity and respect’.

These values are to be firmly embedded within all trust academies to be personified by leaders, staff, parents and our young people.

Our values underpin the way in which all our academies operate on a day to day basis.

Thank you from the Chair of the Brigantia Learning Trust Board

We are very grateful to you for joining us. We hope you enjoy your time as an Academy Advisory Council Member and have the satisfaction of knowing that you are playing a part in transforming the life chances of all the children and young people in our Academies.

You can access more information about Brigantia Learning Trust from our website or from your Academy’s website.

Yours sincerely

David Drayson

Chair of Brigantia Trust Learning Trust

Welcome to Brigantia Learning Trust from the CEO

Thank you for giving up your time to support your local academy in providing the best possible quality of education possible. It is important that the academy leaders are undertaking their roles in the best interests of the community it serves whilst ensuring the mission, vision and values of the Trust are being delivered.

It is an exciting time for the Trust and a lot of changes have taken place recently but I am certain that with your support to assist the Trustees and myself in delivering our statutory duties the future of education for our community is very positive.

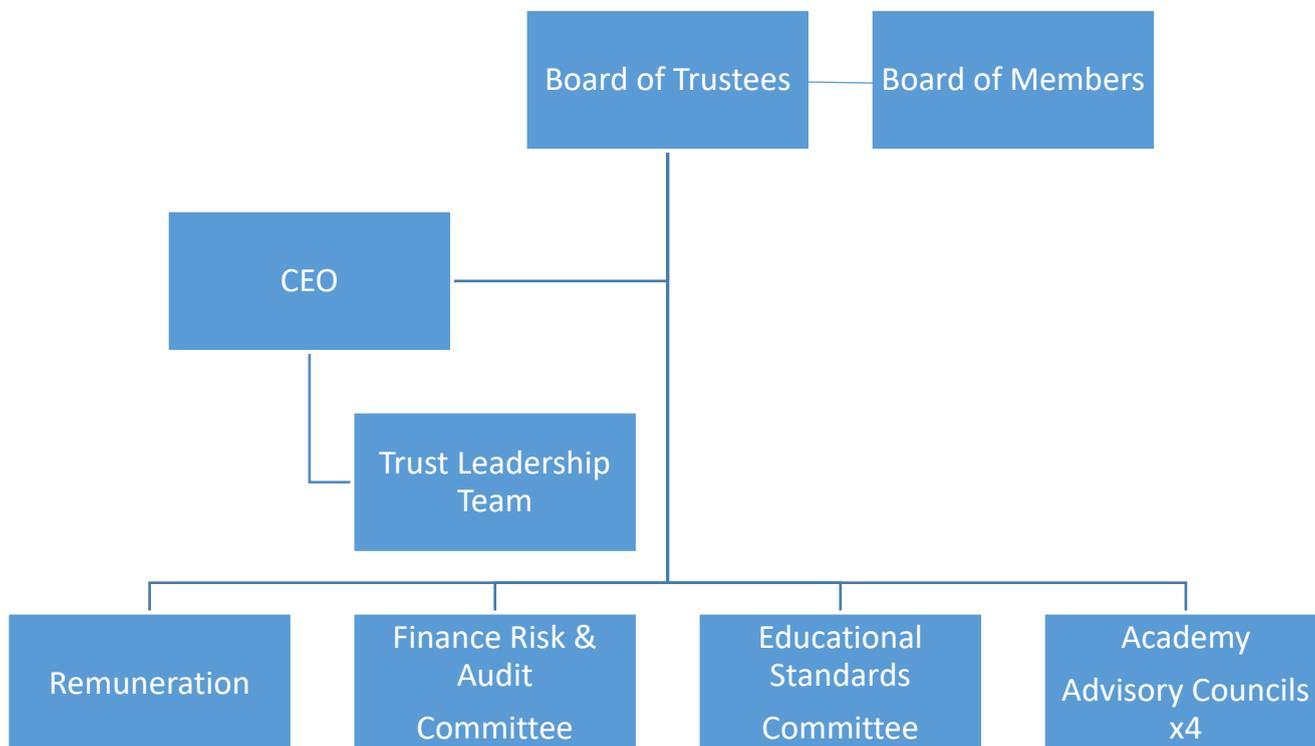
Best Wishes

Mike Westerdale
CEO

2. The Brigantia Learning Trust Governance Model

The Brigantia Learning Trust Governance Model is different to the way a governing body in a non-academy or traditional school undertakes governance.

Essentially, there are four elements to the governance of the Brigantia Learning Trust academies – local councils that are delivered via the Academy Advisory Councils (AAC), Trust governance, delivered via the Full Board of Trustees (Non Executive Directors), the Trust Leadership Team (Executive Directors) and the Trust Members. The Board of Trustees has sub-committees, concerned with Finance and Educational Standards and the four advisory councils; The four Academy Advisory Councils are Concord & Wincobank, Hinde House (2-16), Yewlands and Longley Park Sixth Form.



2.1 Local Councils - The Academy Advisory Council

Each AAC consists of a group of people who could be parents, community nominees, academy staff and, with a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 11 people. They will meet with the Academy Principal and Head of School where appropriate. In attendance at these meetings will be Link Trustees and a member of the Trust Leadership Team. This is to ensure that the voice of the local stakeholders is heard first hand by the Board of Trustees. The Chair of the Trust and the Chief Executive Officer will attend at least one Academy Advisory Council meeting per year.

There will be four Academy Advisory Councils:

Wincobank/Concord

Yewlands

Hinde House 2-16

Longley Park Sixth Form

The Brigantia Learning Trust Board has established five key roles for Academy Advisory Councils:

- To advise/act as a critical friend to the Principal of the Academy;
- To advise the Trustees about local issues they need to consider that affect the academy;
- Represent the interest of the Academy community in the running of the Academy;
- Represent the Academy in its community;
- Provide support to the Principal in undertaking appropriate day to day procedures that are essential to the life of the Academy.

The five roles translate specifically into the following tasks that the AAC undertakes:

- it acts as a key link between the academy, parents and local community;
- it supports the work of the academy in the community;
- it supports the Principal and Academy Leadership Team in the development and implementation of the Academy Development Plan and other relevant plans, ensuring that the Brigantia Learning Trust ethos remains at the heart of the academy community;
- it helps on the ground with the implementation of certain academy policies;
- it offers challenging but positive and proactive support to the Principal;
- it regularly discusses the academy's performance in relation to the KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).

2.2 The Trust Leadership Team (Executive Directors)

The Trust Leadership Team consists of five people led by the Chief Executive Officer This is a skills-based team, with people who have skills in Business/Legal, Finance, HR, Estates and Health and Safety, Marketing/ Communications and Education. The key responsibilities of a Trust Leadership Team are:

- The day to day oversight of the running of the academies;
- Carrying out the MAT's vision, policies and priorities;
- Holding local academy leadership to account for school academic performance, quality of care and provision;
- Overseeing and monitoring the effectiveness of local strategies;
- Seeking value for money and ensuring resources are applied appropriately at academy level;
- Supporting the Board in relation to proper use of funds and delivering high quality educational provision;
- Liaising with the Academy Advisory Councils.

The CEO acts as the direct line manager for each Director in the Trust. Through line management of the Phase Director, each Principal is also held to account – a model which provides professional scrutiny in more detail than some traditional governing bodies are able to achieve. The Directors of Academy will be responsible for undertaking a performance review of the Principal annually and the CEO also attends this.

2.3 The Board of Trustees (Non Executive Directors)

Brigantia Learning Trust is a multi-academy trust operating as a single legal entity. Therefore, it entrusts ultimate responsibility for everything that goes on within Brigantia Learning Trust to the Brigantia Learning Trust Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees oversees educational policy and practice, the standards achieved, the management and deployment of finance, ICT, human resources, governance and strategic development for the whole family of Brigantia Learning Trust Academies. Two subcommittees are set up to enable deeper scrutiny for the areas of Educational Standards and Finance, Risk & Audit. The key responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are:

- Strategic oversight, setting vision and policies for the Trust;
- Ensuring appropriate governance and decision making takes place;
- Ensuring compliance with all regulatory requirements;
- Oversight of standards and outcomes of academies;
- Setting appropriate targets and holding the CEO to account.
- Reviewing performance across the academies and Multi-Academy Trust;
- Agreeing and monitoring the budgets of all the academies;
- Dealing with contractual relationships with third parties.

2.4 The Members

The Members of the Trust are the guardian of the governance process, however they have little strategic or operational responsibility. Their main roles are:

- Appoint the majority of Trustees to the Brigantia Learning Trust Board of Trustees;
- Act as national & regional ambassadors for the Trust;
- Act as a last line of resort in assuring the work of the Board of Trustees.

2.5 The difference between Brigantia Learning Trust Governance and a traditional Governing Body

By comparison to a traditional school Governing Body:

- The AAC's role is not to "manage" the Academy as such. This is done through the Trust Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees. Therefore, the AAC is not required to take decisions on staff or financial matters affecting the Academy. As an Academy Advisor you should have an understanding of strategic issues that impact on the Academy, and be updated on them regularly by the Principal, but you are not required to have direct responsibility for them.

- As the Trust Leadership Team and Board of Trustees takes responsibility for educational standards, legal compliance and financial viability, the AAC then has the time to investigate the impact of policy on the ground, to see how they are working, and explore how the Brigantia Learning Trust ethos is being understood and expressed in the way the Academy operates. As an Academy Advisor, your view as a parent or as part of the community is vital in this discussion.

3. HOW THE AAC OPERATES

3.1 Expectations

Brigantia Learning Trust understands that the role of an Academy Advisor is voluntary, however, in order for the Academy Advisory Council to function efficiently and effectively, there are certain expectations of Academy Advisors in order to achieve this.

i) Meetings

Meetings of the AAC take place roughly once every term. The meeting is prepared by the Principal and the Chair of the AAC and the process is supported by the clerk to the AAC. You will receive an agenda and papers in advance of the meeting from the clerk.

Meetings are usually held in the evenings or at other times as agreed locally by all Academy Advisors.

ii) Contribution at meetings and outside of meetings

Academy Advisors are expected to come to meetings prepared; having read and familiarised themselves with the agenda and accompanying papers as well as being prepared to ask relevant questions (Please see section 3.2 and Appendix 6 for further detail and examples).

iii) Business Interest

Academy Advisors are required to declare any business or other interests in any item being discussed at the AAC meeting. The AAC clerk will have the appropriate form for AAC members to sign.

iv) Link Responsibilities

Academy Advisors are encouraged to be linked with key curriculum and/or other areas of interest/work (e.g. Attendance, SEN, Safeguarding etc.). Academy Advisors should make every effort to visit the Academy during the Academy day; all visits must be planned and focused on areas as agreed by the full Academy Advisory Council. Visits inform the work of the AAC and provide valuable information for support and challenge to the Academy's Leadership Team. AAC members are asked to report on their visit using the appropriate form. This report will be presented at the AAC meetings, and a central record of all visits will be held by the Clerk to the Board of Trustees.

v) Safeguarding

All Academy Advisors are required to have an up-to-date enhanced DBS check, as well as undertake annual safeguarding training as required.

3.2 Focus of Academy Advisory Council Meetings

The table below sets out the key activities and functions that are undertaken throughout the year by the AAC. Good questions to ask in relation to these can be found at the end of this handbook.

Key Activities	Typical Inputs
<p>Understanding the Brigantia Learning Trust vision, mission and ethos</p> <p><u>Our Mission</u> To improve life chances and secure social mobility and justice for children, young people and their families with the communities we serve.</p> <p><u>Our Vision</u> To 'Create Excellence Together' in every phase of a learners' journey from 2-19.</p> <p><u>Our Values</u> As a mixed phase academy trust that serves children and young people from the age of 2-19, we are all united in our values of 'ambition, care, confidence creativity, integrity and respect'. These values are to be firmly embedded within all trust academies to be personified by leaders, staff, parents and our young people. Our values underpin the way in which all our academies operate on a day to day basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethos audit • Thinking skills audit • Brigantia Learning Trust vision, mission statement and ethos
<p>Understanding the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding what services currently exist and where the gaps are • Understanding local issues and needs • Understanding how the Academy relates to the Local Authority in the context of Brigantia Learning Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community audit • Parent and student voice • PTA/Friends associations / Alumni • Local aspirations and community need
<p>Understanding the academy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student attainment and progress • Curriculum • Student behaviour, attendance and safety • Quality of teaching and learning • Continuing Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI sheets • Performance data (ISDR) • National averages • Ofsted reports • Academy Evaluation Document (AED) • Academy visits

<p>Working with the Principal to test the Academy's strategic direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in testing priorities for Academy improvement • Positively challenge and proactively support the Principal and Senior Leadership Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy Development Plan (ADP) • Local aspirations and community needs • Academy Self-evaluation (AED)) • Parent and student voice
<p>Reviewing actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the improvement targets and strategies • Know how to review progress • Know how Pupil Premium is used and any other specified funds e.g. Sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy Development Plan (ADP) • Pupil Premium report (PPR)
<p>Undertaking specific responsibilities Members of the Academy Advisory Council are encouraged to be linked with key curriculum and/or other areas of interest, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality • Behaviour for learning • SEND • Safeguarding • Attendance • Pupil Premium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy Advisors provide reports on their visit to the academy on their assessment of the academy's performance on the areas to which they are linked. The reports will be kept centrally. • Academy Advisors with link responsibilities should be familiar with the policy relating to their area of work. These policies are available on request from your Academy or accessed through the website.

3.3 Guidance and support

i) Termly Agenda

On a termly basis the Director of Academies sends out a recommended agenda to all Principals, AAC Chairs and AAC Clerks. We do not insist that all items detailed on the recommended agenda are considered at each meeting, however, there will be some items indicated on the agenda that must be covered over the academic year. It is expected that Principals and Chairs will work together in customising their agenda with items relating to their academy. The Principal reports to the AAC on what has been happening in the Academy; the AAC may also report on how they have carried out their role with linked responsibilities, e.g. through learning walks, in key areas such as:

- Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Child Protection
- Core subjects areas, e.g. English, Maths and Science
- Links with the local community and feedback from parents

ii) Training

Training may be arranged on a local basis or tailored to meet an individual Academy's needs.

3.4 Evaluation

In preparation for inspection and to improve effectiveness, Academy Advisory Councils should evaluate regularly their own effectiveness. Good AAC Chairs also ask for regular feedback from their Academy Advisory Council to improve their effectiveness.

4. THE ROLE OF ACADEMY ADVISORY COUNCILS IN RELATION TO OFSTED

The AAC of a Brigantia Learning Trust academy has no legal responsibilities during an Ofsted inspection and members of the Trust Leadership Team and Board of Trustees will meet with inspectors. AAC members may be invited to attend as appropriate.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLE GUIDANCE

Area of Responsibility	Good questions to ask/Key Actions <i>This is not an exhaustive list. Academy Advisory Council members can add to this as they see fit</i>
General	KPIs are presented at AAC meetings. Academy Advisors may use these to gain further clarification about percentage increase or decrease and the year forecast.
Ethos (including SMSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well is the ethos lived in the academy? • How well does the AAC connect with the mission & vision statement? • Are staff and students aware of the mission & vision statement? • How is the SMSC (Spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development of students promoted?
Exclusions and Behaviour Statutory	<p>Link Academy Advisors should have a copy of the policy or be directed to it on the website</p> <p>AAC members may explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps between groups, e.g. boys/girls, ethnicity, FSM (Free School Meals), LAC (Looked After Children) and other vulnerable groups etc. • For external exclusions, level of support being given during that time and how they are monitored. • Are exclusions in line with or above national average? • What strategies are in place to prevent exclusions? • What is the behaviour strategy? • Who is responsible? • Who monitors? • How is it evaluated? • What are the success criteria? • What are the target dates? • When will the strategy be reviewed? • What are our key strengths in this area? • What could we do better?
Health & Safety Statutory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link AAC Members should have a copy of the policy or be directed to it on the website • Are there strategies in place to support students? • How H & S is generally promoted in the academy

<p>Safeguarding Statutory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Academy Advisors should have a copy of the policy or be directed to it on the website • Are there any strategies in place to meet the needs of students who are subject to the CP register? • Ask for these to be explained • Number in the Academy (not necessary to know who they are) • How does the Academy work with the LA/other agencies, e.g. Police, Social Services and use of CAFs etc.? • Internet safety - how does the e-safety policy link with general safeguarding and child protection? • Are there key strategies that the AAC could be involved in ?
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<p>Equalities and Inclusion (includes SEN) Statutory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Academy Advisors should have a copy of the policy or be directed to it on the website • What are the identified objectives? • Who is responsible for this area within the Academy? Has a member of the AAC met with them in the academic year? • Who monitors? • How is it evaluated? • What are the success criteria? Have we met them? If not, why not? • What are the target dates? • When will the strategy be reviewed? • How many students have an SEN EHCP? • What are the particular needs of students with SEN? • How are we meeting their needs? • Gaps between groups, e.g. boys/girls, ethnicity, FSM, LAC
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<p>Subject Links Advisory/good practice</p> <p>Maths and numeracy ICT Teaching and Learning English and literacy Humanities, including RE Science Performing Arts PE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the identified objectives? • What is the numeracy strategy? • Which Examination Board do we use? • Why this particular board? ○ Are there links with other subject areas? • How is this subject taught, e.g. one teacher, one year group? • Are there any extra-curricular activities associated with this subject? If so, what are they? • Who is responsible? • Who monitors? • How is it evaluated? • What are the success criteria? Have we met them? If not, why not? • What are the targets? • When will the strategy be reviewed? • What are our key strengths in this area? • What could we do better? • What level of success are we expecting in this area? ○ Are we in line to achieve our expected targets? • Numbers taking exam and are we satisfied with the results we get? • Gaps between groups, e.g. boys/girls, ethnicity, FSM, LAC
<p>Student Council Link Advisory/good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do their meetings function? • Are there good responses and involvement with the teaching staff? • What is the student voice structure within the Academy? • Who oversees the pastoral system in the Academy - what is the vision for student voice in the academy? • Are there effective feedback mechanisms in place? • How well do students feel they are heard?
<p>Parent/Family Association Advisory/good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the AAC and the PTA/Parent Forum work together effectively?
<p>Attendance Advisory/good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there strategies in place to improve attendance, e.g. are students clear about when they are deemed late, e.g. in the building or in tutor groups, classroom etc? • What is the impact of the strategy, e.g. is it working? • Are parents/carers called, if so how soon after the register is taken? • Does the AAC know who the Attendance Lead in the school is?