



TOVE LEARNING TRUST (TLT)
Academy Improvement Board (AIB)

Terms of Reference

Background

The AIB of Rushden Academy (LGA) was appointed by the Tove Learning Trustees (“Board”) as from 01 May 2018. The AIB is an arrangement following the temporary suspension of the local governing body. Trustees will determine when this arrangement will cease.

The membership of the AIB is:

Tim Foster (Chair)
Rob Knell
Chris Youngman
Tracey White

Constitution, Terms of Office and Proceedings

- I. Members of the AIB will hold office for the period that the AIB is in existence, although individual members may resign at any time.
- II. The Board may appoint additional members of the AIB at any time and may remove existing members for reasons of incapacity or misbehaviour.
- III. The Chair of the AIB shall be appointed by the Board although this may be delegated to the CEO. The Board may remove or replace the Chair for reasons of incapacity or misbehaviour.
- IV. The School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003 do not apply in relation to AIBs. It is for the AIB, once constituted, to agree appropriate procedures for the conduct of its business.
- V. The AIB may make such arrangements as they see fit for the discharge of their functions by any other person.
- VI. Whilst it is for the AIB to determine the regularity of meetings, it is anticipated that it will meet initially at least monthly during term time, to ensure the pace of improvement is maintained and to monitor improvement.
- VII. AIB members will commit to attending all meetings, unless due to personal circumstances – in which case the Clerk will be informed in advance of the meeting.
- VIII. All AIB members, the CEO, the Principal, unless the Principal is being discussed, and members of the shadow governing body, once established as determined by the Board, may attend meetings of the AIB and its committees although non-members will not have voting rights.

- IX. Other individuals and observers, including other representatives of the Board, may only attend with agreement of the AIB.
- X. Where confidential matters are being discussed it will be for the AIB to determine if non-members can be present.
- XI. The quorum for all meetings of the AIB will be two members.

3. Duties of the AIB

- I. The AIB will fulfil all functions of a governing body and will conduct the Academy in a way that ensures improvement and promotes high standards of educational achievement.
- II. The main function of the AIB will be to secure governance of the academy, developing a sound basis for academy improvement, with the intention of enabling the academy rapidly to move to secure sustainable improvement.
- III. The duties of the AIB can be summarised under three key roles.

Reference to the scheme of delegation should take place when clarity or detail is required. If there is a conflict the scheme of delegation should always be followed.

a) Be strategic leaders of the academy by:

- Setting targets for Academy improvement;
- Overseeing the conduct of the Academy leadership and management;
- Setting staffing structures in consultation with the TLT's Personnel Committee;
- Monitoring performance management arrangements in consultation with the TLT's Personnel Committee;
- Review policies (drafted by TLT and other leaders) and plans (drafted by the Principal) and ensuring the Academy operates within the policy framework;
- Appointing senior leaders and other key staff as determined by the AIB in consultation with the CEO and Board.

b) Act as a critical friend to the academy's senior leadership team by:

- Monitoring the quality of provision and standards of achievement within the academy;
- Monitoring performance against targets set by the AIB;
- Monitoring the implementation of the policy framework set by the AIB and its impact on standards of achievement;
- Monitoring academy self-evaluation and satisfying itself to the accuracy of this, including via external support as determined by the AIB;
- Ensuring the Academy complies with statutory requirements;
- Providing challenge and support to the Principal and SLT;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress towards post-inspection action points.

c) Hold the principal and SLT to account, and be accountable to any interested party for the academy's performance by:

- Receiving regular information from the Principal and SLT on the performance of all aspects of the Academy;
- Applying the TLT's performance management policy and monitoring its implementation in consultation with the TLT's Personnel Committee;
- Assisting the CEO with conducting the performance management of the Principal and monitoring progress towards agreed targets;
- Ensuring that the annual Academy prospectus meets statutory requirements;
- Monitoring the complaints policy implementation;
- Acting as appeals committee on issues relating to staff grievance, capability, complaints and exclusions in consultation with the TLT's Personnel Committee;
- Determining how the Academy's relationships with parents will be managed including what will be communicated, in what medium and how.

The Role of the Principal

- ii. The Principal will be responsible for the internal organisation, the leadership and management and control of the Academy, and for advising on the implementation of the AIB's strategic framework.
- iii. The Principal will provide the AIB with regular information on the performance of all aspects of the Academy and will comply with any reasonable request from the AIB for information. It is for the AIB to determine the range, content and regularity of these reports. The AIB may request any member of the SLT or other leader to attend its meetings to provide information on the performance of any aspect of the academy for which they are responsible.
- iv. Where the AIB delegates any function to the Principal, the AIB has the power to give the Principal reasonable directions in relation to that function, and oblige the Principal to comply with those directions.

Conduct of the AIB

- v. The AIB will conduct its business in an open and transparent way and in accordance with the principles of standards in public life as determined by the Nolan committee, and with reference to 'The Good Governance, Standards for Public Services' document produced by the Independent Commission for Good Governance in Public Services.
- vi. The AIB is a corporate body and consequently no individual has the power to act alone, unless delegated to do so by the AIB.
- vii. Where functions have been delegated to an individual, or a group, they must report back to the full AIB on actions taken under delegation at the earliest possible opportunity. The AIB remains responsible for any action undertaken on its behalf under delegation.

- viii. Individual members of the AIB must respect confidentiality. It is for the AIB to determine which parts of meetings, and the associated minutes, should remain confidential. Serious breaches of confidentiality may result in the Board removing an individual member from the AIB.
- ix. All dialogue with press agencies will be through close liaison with the CEO, and through the Principal and the Chair of the AIB. No member of the AIB should have contact otherwise with press agencies, unless authorised by the CEO.
- x. Clerking of the meetings will be organised by the Clerk to the AIB. The Clerk will also be bound to confidentiality in line with the confidentiality policy. Where requested, the Clerk may disclose information to the Board of Trustees.

Procedural issues/ suggestions

- xi. AIB minutes will be collated and sent to the Chair within one week for approval, before wider circulation to the members of the AIB, by email.
- xii. Non-confidential minutes will be published on the academy website as soon as is practicable.
- xiii. The agenda for AIB meetings will be determined by the Chair of the AIB in the first instance, at least ten days before the meeting. This will then be circulated to other members for additional items to be considered for the agenda.
- xiv. On request the Principal will present a report to the AIB on progress against each of the areas for improvement, and including a financial update report, and any staffing/HR issues. The report will also include relevant data and student tracking information, and including behaviour and attendance data.
- xv. Urgent decisions that need to be taken by the Principal in the period between AIB meetings will be with the approval of the Chair of the AIB or CEO unless they are financial decisions (CEO/CFO).
- xvi. The decision making processes of the AIB will be open and transparent, and in partnership in the best interests of the academy and its progress towards addressing the key issues for the academy. In the event of a split decision, the Chair of the AIB will have the casting vote.
- xvii. The AIB will contribute to regular newsletters to update parents on the progress the Academy is making and will also inform parents of the outcomes of the HMI/Ofsted visits to the Academy.