



## The Rigby Education Trust and the Maths School

The Rigby Education Trust was set-up to oversee and operate the Lancaster University School of Mathematics. The Trust Members are: Lancaster University as a corporate Member; two Members appointed by Lancaster University and two Members appointed by Cardinal Newman College.

## The role of Members of the Rigby Education Trust

The Department for Education's (DfE) *Governance Handbook*<sup>1</sup> explains the purpose of Members of an academy trust:

*Members play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding academy trust governance. While they must ensure they do not stray into undertaking the academy trustees' role, they should assure themselves that the governance of the academy trust is effective, that academy trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object(s) and that they, the Members, use their powers to step in if governance is failing. Members should not be involved in the day-to-day business of the academy trust. Members have a general duty to exercise their powers to further the academy trust's charitable object, which in the majority of trusts is 'to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom'.*

The Members are able to dismiss Trustees and, in exceptional circumstances, direct Trustees by passing a Special Resolution.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

## The role of Trustees

The Trustees are appointed by Lancaster University and Cardinal Newman College, elected by parents or co-opted by the other Trustees.

The DfE's *Academy Trust Handbook*<sup>2</sup> (and the *Governance Handbook*) states that they should focus:

- *ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction*
- *holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff*
- *overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance.*

As charity trustees and company directors, the Trustees must comply with the trust's charitable objects in the Articles of Incorporation:

*to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a 16 to 19 Academy offering a curriculum appropriate to the needs of its students*

The Trustees must also comply with the Funding Agreement which sets a framework of regulations for the Maths School both financial (use of funds, disposal of assets, accounting audit) and operational (charging, curriculum, admission, etc).

Within the Funding Agreement there is also a general requirement:

*In its conduct and operation, the Academy Trust must apply financial and other controls which meet the requirements of regularity<sup>3</sup>, propriety<sup>4</sup> and value for money.*

This is put into practice by complying with the annually updated *Academy Trust Handbook*.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-trust-handbook>

<sup>3</sup> Regularity is defined as using public funds in compliance with the legislation and purposes for which it was granted.

<sup>4</sup> Propriety is defined as meeting high standards of public conduct, including robust governance and transparency.

As company directors, the Trustees' duties are described in sections 170 to 181 of the Companies Act 2006:

- *act within their powers*
- *promote the success of the company and in doing so have regard to stakeholders (including employees, suppliers, the community, the environment)*
- *exercise independent judgement*
- *exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence*
- *avoid conflicts of interest*
- *not accept benefits from third parties*
- *declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements*

The Trustees must ensure regularity and propriety in use of the trust's funds, and achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness – the three elements of value for money.

## The Trustees' Board and Committees

When the Board undertakes its governance role, it is advised by two committees:

- the Policy and Quality Committee; and
- the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

The committees allow more in-depth scrutiny of decisions and information with the Board adopting a broader strategic view.

## The Chairs

Academy Trust	Simon Guy
Board of Trustees	Len Hampson
Policy and Quality Committee	Alex Belton
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	David Fletcher

**4 July 2023**